THE

LIFE OF CHARLES LEVER.

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OF

CHARLES LEVER.

BY

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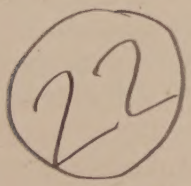
IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.



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THROUGHOUT Lever's last year at Templeogue he lived a hermit's life: but by no means so at first. Genial friends thronged rooms and grounds, writing and talking, and did their best to make it a little Ferney. His garden—at first given perhaps to wild flowers—gradually, under gentle culture, began sweetly to smile. His reception rooms were furnished with articles of *virtù*, choice paintings, pleasant books, and well-stocked albums. An old College friend of his, Sir Kingston James, having been asked by Mrs. Lever to write something about her husband, threw off the following impromptu:—

> To move the world, exclaimed the sage,
> A fulcrum's all I want. Deceiver!
> How could'st thou have redeemed that gage,
> Without, like us, thou hadst a Lever.

A magazine paper of his, in July, 1842, gives a peep

of what he styles his snuggery: "Time, eleven o'clock P.M. The moon is faintly struggling through the half-closed window curtains, to mix her pale light with the red glare of a carcel-lamp that stands on a round table. Books, bronzes, statuettes, with some carving, decorate the walls. Manuscripts and rolls of paper, proof sheets and open letters litter the floor." His German "factotum," Kiffer, enters with coffee and curaçoa, and later on, summons him to a grilled "bone."

More exciting pleasures sometimes lit up that quaint old house. Lever liked cards; and many a night, until the small hours, the play ran high. Amongst those who jingled gold in showers were a peer, a judge, and a F.T.C.D. So fond of whist was Lever, that he once played all night at a hotel in Kingstown, intending to leave Ireland by the morning boat, but the chances of the game chained him to his seat, and he is said to have let the ship depart, and continued to play all that day, until the rapidly tolled bell of the evening boat led him at last to desist and run. In love of whist he equalled Fox, whom he later resembled in girth of frame; and it is told of the statesman that he once played for twenty-four hours, a waiter standing by to tell the sleepy and bewildered partners whose deal it was. Lever, however, was wide awake on such occasions, and the man should get up early, as he said, to steal a march on him.

"I well remember a Sylvester evening at Templeogue," writes one of the Coterie, "where Dr. Walsh, who wrote about Servia, was present, and where the desperate

whist players, Lord Muskerry included, found on going to the cars early in the morning, that these had become so locked into one another, that they could not be got asunder, and had to remain till a smith was called at 5 A.M., and how Henry Maunsell and Digby Starkey and some others took Lord Muskerry home to his father-in-law's (Harry Grady's) house in Merrion Square, and how Lady Muskerry came down in her night-dress to open the door, and pitched into his lordship then and there for being out so late."

The sixth of Anne (cap. 17) makes it unlawful to keep a house in which gaming is carried on, except "the Castle," and prohibits any game being played there, unless during the residence of the Viceroy. Lever could not well regard as a vice, an indulgence the practice of which was limited to the highest office of the state: though in his works he often deprecates such habits.

Later in life he held a theory that a man to attain eminence as a statesman or a politician must be a good whist-player—and he cited a long list of examples, from Fox, Talleyrand, Metternich, Melbourne, Cavour, and Reetsbeg, to Antonelli, whilst he shewed that physicians have always been behind their age in whist. For a leader in the House, he said, it was an absolute necessity. "Glance at what goes on in Parliament in this non-whist age, and mark the consequences. Look in at an ordinary sitting, and see how damaging to his party that man is, who will to-day ask a question, which this day week would be unanswerable. What is that but 'playing his

card out of time?' See that other who rises to know if something be true; the unlucky 'something' being the key-note to his party's politics, which he has thus disclosed. What is this but 'showing his hand?' Hear that dreary blunderer who has unwittingly contradicted what his chief has just asserted—'trumping,' as it were, 'his partner's trick.' Or that still more fatal wretch, who rising at a wrong moment, has taken 'the lead out of the hand' that could have won the game. I boldly ask, would there be one—even one—of these solecisms committed in an age when whist was cultivated, and men were brought up in the knowledge and practice of the odd trick?"

When he wanted real enjoyment he played Loo. In "Jack Hinton" he reverts with pleasure to his game of Loo, whose pecuniary limits were fourpence, but whose boundaries as to joke and broad humour were wide as the great Atlantic. "He enjoyed cards," observes Major L——h, "purely for social enjoyment, and with all the hearty abandon of boyhood. I have played push-pin with him for an hour at a time; and sometimes leap-frog round his own room, when, on the last occasion that we engaged in it, I got so bad a fall that I was in no hurry to seek a renewal of the pastime."

Recent inquiries at Templeogue have failed to elicit from the oldest inhabitant any recollection of Lever more noteworthy than that he had a dashing wife, who used to fly up and down the roads with a carriage full of children. By "Dubliners" it was remarked, as Judge L—— reminds

us, that she went but little into society, and was never seen with her husband on those occasions when, accompanied by his children, he rode or drove into the city.* This mistake, it will be seen, was subsequently corrected at Florence.

Lever gave at this time an amusing account of the plethora of labour which editorial duty entailed upon him. Sheafs of MS. pursued him; he must needs separate the ripe and ruddy fruit of genius from the rotten and tasteless apple of dulness. But this was nothing to the letters which called for answers. "E. F." complained that it was four months since he forwarded his "Ode on the Industrious Fleas," and the late editor had assured him it should obtain early insertion. One day a fine salmon accompanied a "fishy" looking paper, but failed to bribe its insertion. "I live very far from all literary society," writes Miss Jane Saunderson, "and rarely see a book except your delightful writings, and the *Missionary Magazine*, both of which papa takes." A long letter of queries asked if Archbishop Whately wrote the "Nuts" and if that sweet poetess Lytton Bulwer were married?

* Major D—— writes:—"Mrs. Lever was at first somewhat shy and apparently impassive before strangers; subsequently she became more communicative and agreeable. She was a very good little woman, very fond of her husband, and very careful to protect him from being intruded on when at work; she was generous and kind too. She had a quick temper, but proved an excellent wife to him, and he really loved her to the last. To her children she was very good, and to Charlie most indulgent. If I were asked to point out her weakness, I would say that it consisted in a too great fondness for display in dress." One of the household states that when she differed with Lever on some domestic point, he at once put her in good humour, by presenting some handsome addition to her wardrobe."

A parson at Nenagh remarked that what are called amusing papers occupied undue space in the Magazine. "May I suggest, if you do not mean it to be wholly light, some short contributions on Swaine's 'Sentences;' they are little known to the bulk of readers, and are full of instruction and philosophy." Two papers on "Napier's War in Syria" came from the same source; one laudatory, the other abusive, that Lever might judge of his contributor's style in both walks. "For the civil notice he would expect £4; for the wigging £2 10*s*. H—— A——, whom Lever once said was not worth acceptance as pig-ballast (p. 305, vol. i.), now wrote to say that unless Lever's own things, "the magazine was devilish dull." "Still," he added, "you can't write a whole journal; and you do want some short touchy bits of real racy fun. Now I am keeping *Bentley* afloat for the last two years —heavy devils there also—but I am all cork, and can float a line of battle ship full of Balaam." Lever went on to tell that A—— offered some things which had already appeared in *Colburn;* but as nobody read that serial, they were perhaps as good as new. What of a short series about "Cripples"? A—— had just done a small bit for Bentley about a child scraped to death with a small tooth comb, and he offered to do for Lever, "Gaieties and Gravities" lower than any one. Miss Emma Scott sent "a short Legend," which the printer found would run to 410 pages. Mr. Hall, from Newry, wrote to stop his subscription, on the ground "of the trimming tone of Lever's politics." The editor, half

worried and half amused, declared that a hen's-foot in lamp-black was clearness compared to much of the MS. which came before him.

The last half of the year 1842 found Lever hard at work on "Tom Burke." He had been for many weeks stinting himself in sleep, and he vowed that he was more like one of the tin cases of polar vegetables than a mortal editor. The world, however, would reap the fruit, and in his special mildness of temper the magazine would be cold cream for irritable natures. The first proofs of "Tom Burke" he sent to the Rev. Samuel Hayman—hoping that, not having any fear of Gil Blas' bishop before him, he would tell frankly what he thought of it—and Lever promised, on the faith of a true man, not to play bishop. Lever himself pronounced it "flat," but prayed heaven that it might not prove "unprofitable!" Mortimer O'Sullivan wrote to say that he considered "Tom Burke" by far Lever's best hit—as to story, intention, and reality. This encouraging letter came, he said, at the very moment when he most wanted a warm stimulant. He plunged into his story vigorously, pointed a moral, and remarked that if "Tom Burke" had little wit, it had some warning, and as Bob Lambert observed to the hangman, who soaped the rope for his execution, "That same's a comfort!" O'Connell, it would appear, had attacked Lever in a public speech about this time; for the latter, in presenting No. 2 of "Tom Burke" to a friend, said, "Here is rebellion enough to make Dan recant his judgment of me in his next speech."

Lever's able and distinguished friend Major D—— informs us that it was from particulars of his own career as a military officer in foreign service that Lever moulded the character of Tom Burke.

"There was at this period," the Major writes, "just 27 years after the great battle which terminated the Napoleonic period, a sort of craving for military light literature, into which narratives of martial adventure are introduced; for although we have some very good military histories, there does not, as yet, exist a military literature. Lever had had several predecessors in this line, including the authors of 'The Subaltern,' Mr. Gleig; of the 'Stories of Waterloo,' Prebendary Maxwell; of the 'Random Shots of a Rifleman,' Captain Kincaid, and others; and he seemed so confident that the demand for this kind of writing would continue, that, contrary to the practice of most authors, he actually beat up for recruits, who, if they had been successful, might have become his rivals and competitors. Here follows a dialogue between Lever and myself, the scene being the eastern pier at Kingstown :—

"*Lever.* 'Could you not write military stories, or a series of them, for the Magazine? I should be glad to have them.'

"*D*——. 'No, I don't think I could; in fact, I am sure I could not.'

"'And why? Having a knowledge of military matters, you should be able.'

"'I never thought of doing such a thing. I should not know how to set about it.'

"'Oh! that is easy enough. I will tell you how to begin, if that is all you want. Have you never visited any of the great battle fields of Europe besides Waterloo?'

"'Oh, yes, a great many, and studied them too.'

"'Well! that is all you want. Just imagine that you are overlooking any one of these battle fields; then create a few actors, and set them in motion; the remainder is easy enough. You would want a woman or two.'

"'I could easily do what you say, but the only actors I could create would be infantry-men, rifles, cuirassiers, hussars, gunners, or aggregates of them in the shape of battalions, squadrons, batteries; as to the women, I could scarcely undertake them at all. Then the action would be the real military movements that occurred so far as they could be ascertained.'

"'What on earth are you talking of? That is what Siborne is doing. I want something like Maxwell's stories, or—my own.'

"'Pardon me for saying it, but in that case you should not address yourself to anyone that understands military matters, to use your own words. Such a one will be very likely to take my view; it is only someone that knows nothing at all about military matters that can pretend to have seen and be able to describe a whole battle, in the heroic sensational style that would suit the libretto of an opera, for instance.'

"'Good heavens! I am so glad you said that word; something flashed upon me that I have been

vainly trying to make out, ever so long. I must kill Minette.'

"'Kill Minette! Who on earth is Minette, and why must you kill her?'

"'Not know Minette, the Vivandière, in "Tom Burke!" Impossible! Well, Mrs. Lever has been telling me all along that the character is not original, that she has seen it somewhere before, and we have both of us been puzzling our brains to find out where, but to no purpose. But last night Kate asked me to go to the theatre with her to see "La Figlia del Reggimento." Then it was I found that I had been running away with Donizetti's girl all the time, and now I must kill her, by Jove!'

"'And pray what had you intended to do with Minette; marry her to Tom Burke, and send the pair to live on the paternal acres at Ballymactagandrag in the Barony of Muskerry?'

"'Well, I don't know exactly; something of the sort, I suppose.'

"'And now let me ask you in return, where did you get the military details for your stories?'

"'For what is in O'Malley I am chiefly indebted to Napier; for the rest to a work you ought to know, "Les Victoires et Conquêtes de l'Armée Française."'*

"'I do know it well indeed, and a more one-sided and unreliable book you could scarcely have selected, but I

* *Victoires, conquêtes, désastres, revers et guerres civiles des Français de* 1792 *à* 1815, *par une société de militaires*, 15 *vol. in* 8*vo*, 1835. It is preserved in the public library at Brussels.

suppose it answered your purpose just as well as any other.'

"'Just so. I only wanted dates and names. As to you, I perceive that you are only fit to write heavy articles. You are one of those, I take it, who can or will write only about what they profess to understand—not a very profitable *métier*, I can assure you; but one unpleasantness at least you will thereby escape, namely, the ire of individuals whose vanity or self-complacency has been wounded. Just fancy, old Monsoon's son went over to Brussels, when I was there, for the express purpose of shooting me, in duello of course, for having exaggerated too grossly, as he thought, the gallant major's sentiments on a variety of delicate subjects. The best of it was, that after a few days *séjour* in the paternal mansion, the son was obliged to confess that I had rather underdrawn than the contrary, and so I was permitted to live a little longer. Come along—it is now time for us to go aboard the convict ship; the boat is, as you see, waiting for us at the jetty.'"

In "Tom Burke" he utilised the material he had already collected when following the campaigns of the Consulate and the Empire. Hayman remarked to him "that he believed he was the only one who cared for Napoleon and his times in this age of the world." Louis Philippe was then in the zenith of his power, and the prestige of the Bourbons seemed at its height; yet Lever quite anticipated the Napoleonic revival which set in so strongly ten years later. He visited France in

1843, but was not dazzled by the gorgeous glare of Louis Philippe, who "was as much king as was Napoleon, and as much as Louis XIV. himself, and ruled Guizot, who ruled the Chamber." A man writing for the market would perhaps not have opened the tale in Ireland, but Lever, true son of the soil as he was, found old memories flooding in upon him so powerfully that he could not cast them off. He laboured, as he tells us, to imbue his hero so intensely with the traits of his own land, to mark him out so distinctly Irish before launching him among Frenchmen, that he would have a place in the reader's mind, and be able to attach to himself an interest quite different from that of any other character in the story.

In France he found a fertile field. The first Napoleon is graphically sketched, both by author and artist in this book. Some stirring incidents of French life are freely dashed off, and even the Irish anecdotes, which at first seem so racy of the soil, are as redolent of cogniac as of poteen. The knight's colloquy with the Irish tenant, who earns his rents by acting the part of a wild Indian at the Egyptian Hall in London, is irresistibly droll, but is quite as much the property of France as of Ireland, the same story being told, though much less effectively, by Paul de Kock, who makes the hero a Frenchman, and Paris the theatre of exhibition. This, no doubt, is a coincidence rather than a plagiarism on either side, a great affinity and sympathy between the French and Irish notoriously existing. The present Knight of Kerry, addressing us, says that the story told by Lever

of his father and the Irishman passing himself off as a wild Indian is in the main authentic. When, in the showroom, he had given forth his gibberish, the Knight menacingly taxed him with being a native of Iveragh; the man, overawed by the suddenness of the reproach coming from one who, from his boyhood, he had been taught to revere, confessed his duplicity, and besought the knight not to expose him.* Whether Paul de Kock cribbed this from Lever, or accidentally hit upon the same idea, is doubtful. The French and Irish possess an equally prompt perception of the ludicrous. The incidents of some of Boucicault's best plays are borrowed from our Gallic friends. That richly Hibernian farce, "The Irish Tutor," in which Tyrone Power so often delighted audiences as Doctor O'Toole, is an adaptation from the French by Lord Glengall. The same remark applies to "The Quiet Rubber," in which Mr. Hare so ably personates the part of the Irish peer, Lord Kilcare. Few would regard Micky Free as Frenchy, and yet Lever once said of him:—

"He is not an exaggeration, simply because nothing can exaggerate the versatile drollery of a people who, with the raciest turn for humour, combine the sharp-witted flippancy of a polished Frenchman. Never nonplussed for an expedient, never pushed for a rejoinder, like their native horses they are always well back on their haunches, and ready for a spring."

* Letter of the Knight of Kerry, 8th March, 1876.

From the Irish peasant to the Irish squire, as presented by Lever, a sort of French varnish overspreads both. Regarding Kenny Dodd—perhaps the best of his characters—a critic said, "Montaigne would have chosen him for a companion. Molière would have sympathised with and loved him."

Lever was very anxious to secure the pencil of Tony Johannot for "Tom Burke," feeling that his pictures of Frenchmen would be more graphic than those of Phiz; while his name, like French vinegar, would give a piquancy to the whole. It was, we think, Dr. Maginn who remarked that "Lorrequer," "O'Malley," and "Tom Burke," with their powerfully individualized "I," resembled the "Gil Blas" of Le Sage, while the bright wit of all reminds us of Beaumarchais' "Figaro," in which sentence after sentence blazes forth and bangs like a discharge of fireworks.

"If," observes Major D——, who from boyhood to age carefully studied the mind of Lever, and acquired a deep knowledge of the German character by long residence, "if he had been a Celtic Irishman, Gallic sympathies, excellences and defects, would have been quite natural, but Lever was an Anglo-Saxon by race. What is there in the fickle and everchanging climate of Ireland that makes those subjected to its influence Frenchy, and renders them indisposed to the severe and patient labour of the Saxon? Truly, this is wonderful; and I have always regretted, for his sake, that Lever did not in his youth spend more than one winter in Germany."

Lever's bias on returning to Ireland was thoroughly German. Tired at last of the Burschenschaft, he became very Irish, and more and more French in his sympathies. His style, with its brilliant dialogue and cutting repartee, was decidedly French, and founded on French models, whilst it must be allowed that its greatest faults, want of accuracy and frequent anachronism, are equally French. A favourite occupation of his at this time, "Nuts and Nutcrackers," were modelled on the "Guêpes" of Alphonse Karr.

A trip to Paris in April, 1843, made him still more Gallic, and furnished ample gossip for the delectation of fireside friends, on his return. His main object in going was to impart an extra French polish to the marvellously progressive boots of "Tom Burke."

Finding the Boulogne boat full—no one having courage to cross *viâ* Calais, whose "*paquebot à vapeur*," had long been condemned—he needs must make use of the latter, and after a severe passage, characterised by much screaming and sea-sickness, reached the Goodwin Sands. The boat "manned by rats," is described as being, happily, too rotten to sink. By high pay and civil speeches he secured a suite of rooms in the Hôtel Wagram overlooking the Tuileries. All he saw greatly elated him, and proved a fine relaxation after his editorial worries and fagging journey.

Lever left Ireland in a snowstorm, with sleet flying through a leaden sky—no sun above, and dark mud below—to reach Paris, where all the trees in the Tuileries

were in blossom—silver flowing fountains splashing and —brighter than all—the fair Parisiennes in all the freshness of their spring colours tripping daintily along the orange walk—their dark eyes sparkling, and their *méchantes* lips trembling, as he said, with some nicely enunciated greeting.

At Paris he made the acquaintance of Alfred de Vigny and other littérateurs, who he wrote home to say were coming on a visit to Templeogue. Galignani he described as a most haughty Bashaw—who affected to have hardly heard of the magazine edited by Lever, but the latter pulled him up short by the remark that it had been repeatedly advertised in his own print.

"Lever in this trip," writes Canon Hayman, "made arrangements with several French authors, including de Vigny, for contributions, and he wrote to me in high spirits for this reason. He also announced his arrangements in the Magazine; and a kind of introductory paper on the works of Henri Bayle de Steadhal, appeared in the 22nd volume. He was, I think, not a little disappointed when, to the best of my ability, I discouraged him in his French novels project, which soon all fell through.

"'L'Irlande Apocryphe,' a review by Lever of an *imaginary* work on Ireland, indicates the bias of his mind at this period. It was suggested by 'Napoléon Apocryphe,' in which some enthusiast supposed that Waterloo was won by the French—a landing in England

followed — a conquest of Ireland, and the Emperor crowned Monarch of Europe!"

Traces of Lever's trip to France may be found in the "Coiffeur of Sèvres," a powerful tale, which in October, 1844, he gave to his Magazine. Also, in "The Early Train to Versailles," pp. 465—470, and "The Tunnel of Truban" later. The system of railway locomotion contrasted unpleasantly with the coaching days of which he retained so bright a remembrance.* He liked the well-appointed coach with its four blood bays tossing their heads with impatience, as they stood before the village inn waiting for the passengers to breakfast. "I loved every jingle of the brass housings—the flap of the traces and the bang of the swing-bar were music to my ears." He felt that if steam supplied a new method of fast travelling through life, it also suggested twenty new ways of getting out of it. It was nothing but the story of the down train and the up. The old fast coach never killed anybody save the timid man who jumped off. Sometimes, no doubt, the coachman's shoulder was dislocated, he said, but from

* Time was when Lever loved to sit beside that rare character who wrapped his great coat round his legs, and gathered up the reins with that careless indolence that seemed to say "The beasts need no guidance, sir,—they know what they are about:" the very leer of his merry eye to the buxom figure within the bar was a novel in three volumes. "And mark," said Lever, "how lazily he takes the whip from the fellow that stands on the wheel, proud of such a service; and hear him as he cries 'All right, Bill, let him go!' and then note the graceful curls of the long lash as it plays round the leader's flanks, and makes the skittish devils bound ere they are touched." Lever looked back with pleasure on the joyous sensations with which all whilom careered along the mountain side, where the breeze was fresh and bracing—the wide-spread country beneath, across which the shadows moved like waves.

the old habit of being shot out, the bone rolled in again like a game of cup-and-ball.

In London—*en route* home—he tried to write, but found it hopeless. Upstairs some one was practising the key-bugle, with sackbut and psaltery, all day long; beneath his windows rose the din of call-men and barrel-organs. Within, authors and authors' friends gossiped, bowed, and—bored!

Ere long he was home and in harness again. He described himself to Hayman as "horribly hipped," —that he was *ennuyé à la mort*—and bored by clever people the reverse of amusing, and he thirsted "for a pleasant little evening with folk who could converse and feel that talking was no common gift within the reach of all the white *cravat-ted* population of the globe!"

Two bright members of this fraternity were found in Hayman and O'Sullivan. They concurred in preferring "O'Leary" to "Burke." "Well, I have been straining every nerve to make 'Burke' the best of all my books," he replied; "but I fear it may be the old story of Liston believing his talent lay in tragedy."

A kind friend who asked him to his house was told, "If it were not for the hard lot that bids me 'work, work!' or the cry of the devils 'give, give!' I should certainly go; but my trip to Paris, and the long arrears it has led to, are insuperable barriers to my rest, however wished for."

Some of the contributors were not up to time with their promised papers: others who sent what did not

quite suit must needs be appeased by plausible speeches. "Your paper was too late—for we are such wonderful people that we have to send the Magazine to the Colonies, Lancaster Sound and Hong Kong by the 10th courant." A line to another asked, "When can I have 'Miss Martineau?'—a droll query—you can keep 'Mrs. Gray' over—so that's something." Lever had sent for review "Essays of an Invalid," by the first, and "Sketches from the Antique," by Mrs. Gray. He described himself as in a flutter of expectancy as to the reception his own book was to get at the hands of the critics.

It was about this time that he strongly recommended McGlashan to bring out a book to be called "The Irish by Themselves," like "Les Français," and to be done by several hands, including Otway and Carleton. "Of all countries," he said, "it presented most facilities for that sort of thing;" and sketched out a list of subjects, which embraced "The Irish Artist (he had Mr. Sharp in his mind); The Country Dancing Master; The Medical Student; The Irish Fellow T. C. D.; The Irish Waiter; The Half-pay Captain; The Irish Widow; The Irish Author; The Common Council-man; The Auctioneer; The Irish Beggar; The Boarding-house Keeper; The Hedge Schoolmaster; The Doctor; The Sporting Gentleman; Country Attorney; Popular Preacher; The Hackney-Carman; The Dublin Dandy; The Favourite Actor; The Dublin Belle." The whole enclosed in an Emerald cover, with an Irishman on a spit, and another roasting him—according to Swift's well-known aspersion. This

project—some might say happily for Lever's fame—was relinquished.

His letters from January to May, 1844, make frequent references to his ill-health, which at times became alarming. He said that he always got his good or ill fortune wholesale, and never in driblets like so many other people. To the Rev. Samuel Hayman most of these confidences were unbosomed. If the bright parson were not too good a fellow to mind trifles, Lever said, he would have cut him dead from the lachrymose tone of his late notes, and in truth he would have cut himself, if he only knew how to go about it. Doctors *en masse* came to Templeogue, worrying him with warnings, and causing his wife, as he said, to badger him about diet and drinkables till he scarce knew whether he was a glass retort that would explode if the wrong fluid got into it. Well, the end of it was, the doctors made him far worse than he was before. He used to sleep sixteen hours, he now dozed about twenty hours, and yawned away the other four. He could not work or even read; and as to pen and ink, he knew nothing about them; and when he heard of the Magazine, he fancied they spoke of that picturesque fort that crowns a hill in the Phœnix. This, he added, was a very blue look-out for a man who should convert his brains into bread; but so it was, and when it should be otherwise the Fates or the apothecaries might, perhaps, tell.

Lever used to tell of Lord Dudley that, when Secretary for Foreign Affairs, he directed a letter meant for the

French to the Russian Ambassador shortly before Navarino, which Prince Lieven set down as one of the cleverest ruses ever attempted to be played off, and gave himself credit for not falling into the trap laid for him by the sinister tact of the English Secretary. Lever was not an absent man, but addled over stupid MSS., he sometimes infectiously made a blunder. Though he liked the man, he rather pooh-poohed the stereotyped "Two Cavaliers" of G. P. R. James; "who of a fine autumnal day might be seen," &c. A letter to the Rev. Ed. Johnson, asking him to write for the magazine, was in mistake addressed by Lever to James. Lever described to friends these and other awkwardnesses quite as amusing as any of the equivokes detailed with such gusto in "Lorrequer" or "O'Malley"; he had no intention whatever of asking James to contribute, and now to explain would only vex him. Lever's letter to Mr. Johnson, besides soliciting literary aid, asked him on a visit to his house. James is found soon after not only contributing to the Magazine, but a guest at Templeogue.*

* Here Major D—— met him and Captain Siborne in 1842, and a full record of their conversations from the same Boswellian source will be found appended to this volume. "'James's Story,'" he writes, "which was soon afterwards brought out by McGlashan, was entitled 'De Lunatico Inquirendo,' and although many assumed it to be by Lever himself, it proved a considerable failure, in fact *un fiasco colossal.*" To the Magazine James gave "Arrah Neil!" McGlashan pruned freely. James abused McGlashan to Lever for having emasculated his jokes. "Where be they?—as we used to say in the Catechism," muttered Lever. He told McGlashan to beware of the "Lunatico," who had become dangerous from irritation, but suggested that as James had been dining twice a-week with the Duke of Wellington, he had eaten himself into a more than ordinary bilious temper. Lever

We find traces of a number of similar blunders which he made about the same time, and which would have been laughable had the symptoms not been painful. To Hayman he described himself as worried by unceasing headaches, and in a state of fidgety irritation about all things great and small, increased by his brother, then on a visit to him, who, he added, had a talent for fussing even greater than his own. At that moment he had a mass of work on his hands, including, as he said, various unintelligible proofs to be made easy reading. It was a great discomfort to leave home at its prettiest season, but he was doctor enough to know that he wanted rest, and could only obtain it by flying to where there were neither booksellers nor printers' devils.*

But as this was impracticable at that moment he assembled a number of guests at Templeogue, to the surprise of his wife and brother, both of whom were

would sometimes say that he wanted powder for his magazine. "It is doubtful whether James's contributions," he said, "were 'James's powder' at all, or merely that inferior substitute which the Pharmacopœia condemns.' Chambers' Cyclopædia stated, twenty years before the death of James, that he was in the habit of dictating to minor scribes his thick-coming fancies. Major D——, who knew James at Baden, saw one of his novels written somewhat under these circumstances: "It was penned by an English artist who resided at Lichtenthal, and who spoke the purest South Devonian, and moreover wrote English nearly as he pronounced it. James's flowery language thus rendered, was highly amusing; I had an opportunity of reading some pages of copy."

* In August, 1844, he was quite unable from sick headache to fill a space in the proof, and scribbled a line to McGlashan leaving to him and to his cleverness the way out of the scrape. The quantity was an awkward one, and he could no more help it than that he was not six feet high! By leads and other ingenious modes of typographical expansion, these difficulties were often smoothed

persons of specially quiet tastes. These guests included Sheridan Knowles, Whiteside, afterwards Chief Justice, O'Sullivan, and a nephew of Guizot's, with "five respectable second-raters." Once or twice Lever stopped a curtain lecture just gently beginning, by assuring his wife that idleness was the only cure for his complaint.

This excitement, however, was followed by some reaction, and neglected work produced arrears to be pulled up: newspaper attacks teased him, and work and worry brought renewed penalties and prescriptions. He was urged to dissipate his thoughts by a pleasant trip; but, as he told Hayman, in July, 1844, this agreeable prospect received a chill check by his old mentor Cusack prohibiting him from holding intercourse with railroads and steamboats and other conveniences where keeping up the steam presented an unhappy analogy with, as he said, his own condition. He resigned himself to the decree, and like the Bishop in Lover's story, who, not being able to procure *wine*, had to content himself with *whey*, he decided to ramble through the south and west of Ireland for a month or six weeks, as chance, whim, and post-horses might lead him. Hungary and the Tyrol, *vice* Tipperary and Clare, were an exchange with a difference, but still there was a good deal to do in Ireland if one only knew how, and he needs must make the best of it.

Lever wrote to Hayman saying that the eminent medical authority, Mr. Cusack, having studied his case, came to the conclusion that he suffered from apoplectic

threatenings. Cusack put him on low diet, and permitted no drink stronger than water. Lever begged Hayman not to allude to this matter, as *cara sposa* saw his letters, and knew nothing of the gloomy view of this affair, which, after all, might still blow over. Those letters were the only "*vin mousseux*" he was allowed to taste, and as Hayman had accustomed him to their *stimuli*, he could not do without them.

This route was a devious course. He zigzagged, as he said, through Wicklow, down to New Ross; and, despite Cusack's caution, steamed, horses and all, to Waterford, and thence to Dungarvan and Lismore by a beautiful drive along the Blackwater. We afterwards find him at Cork, Blarney, Glengariff, and Killarney.

Invitations poured in upon him, but he preferred an Inn where there was no bondage. "Fraser's Guide," he said, wanted some notices of the hotels, of which all he ever says is, "Here *conveyances and post-horses can be had*," and as men don't eat hacks and jaunting cars, the information was scarcely sufficient, besides that, in reality, such was the information most needed in the overland journey through Ireland.

One hotel, at which he made a long stay, greatly pleased him. He declared, with a chuckle and a blush of modesty combined, that the landlord treated him under the pleasant delusion of his being a person of consequence—a deception, he added, which he sincerely hoped might not cease until the time of making up the bill. Chickens and salmon and salmon and chickens were, he said, the

staple of the *cuisine Irlandaise*, and Kate and he ate both till they could swim and fly like either.

In passing through Clare and the great County of the Tribes he felt a bit nervous of meeting Father Malachy and "the man for Galway." This feeling, however, was forgotten in the delight awakened by a visit to Connemara, the cliffs of Moher, Milton Malbay, Spanish Point, and Kilkee. He summarised his progress to Hayman by saying that they had been rambling ever on—climbing mountains, fording rivers, crossing bays, tramping along roads, so incessantly that pen and ink were out of the question; to pack up at morning and unpack at night, being the only labours they could accomplish beyond the daily fatigues of the road. Lever would have preferred that his tour had been on the Continent; but "It's an ill wind," &c. One of the fruits of this Irish tour peeps forth in the following reminiscences penned by Lever at Trieste shortly previous to his death.

"I may recall an incident, which if only for the trait of good humour it displayed, is worth remembering. I was making a rambling tour through Ireland with my wife, following for the most part the seaboard, and only taking such short cuts inland as should bring us to some spot of especial interest. We journeyed with our own horses, and consequently rarely exceeded thirty miles in a day. While I was thus refreshing many an old memory, and occasionally acquiring some new experience, the ramble interested me much. It was in the course of this almost capricious journey—for we really had nothing like

a plan—we reached the little town of Gort, where, to rest our horses, we were obliged to remain a day. In strolling half listlessly about we were overtaken by a heavy thunderstorm, and driven to take shelter in a little shop, where a number of other people had also sought refuge. As we stood there, an active-looking but elderly man, in the neat black of an ecclesiastic and with a rosette in his hat, politely addressed us; and proposed that instead of standing there in the crowd we would accept the hospitality of his lodging, which was in the same house, till such time as the storm should have passed over. His manner, his voice, and his general appearance convinced me he was a dignitary of our church. I thanked him for his courtesy, and accepted his offer. He proceeded to show us the way, and we entered a very comfortably furnished sitting-room, where a pleasant fire was burning, and sat down well pleased with our good fortune.

"While we chatted freely over the weather and the crops, some chance expression escaped me to show that I had regarded him as a clergyman of the Established Church. He at once, but with peculiar delicacy, hastened to correct my mistake, and introduced himself as the Roman Catholic Dean O'Shaughnessy.* 'I am aware

* The only priest of this name who filled the office of Dean was the late P. P. of Ennis, who would have just as much business to live in Gort as at Canterbury. Dean O'Shaughnessy belonged to the diocese of Killaloe, whereas Gort is in Galway. An old habit of trying to be as accurate as possible led us to ask the R. C. Bishop of Galway to make inquiries on the subject. This he was kind enough to do; a letter dated December 10th,

whom I am speaking to,' added he, pronouncing my name.

"After a few very flattering remarks on the pleasure something of mine had afforded him, he said, 'You are very hard upon *us*, Mr. Lever. You never let *us* off easily, but I assure you for all that we bear you no ill will. There is a strong national tie between us, and we can stand a great deal of quizzing for the sake of that bond.'

"I knew that he was alluding to his order, and when I said something about the freedoms that fiction led to, he stopped, saying,

"'Well, well! the priests are not very angry with you after all, if it wasn't for one thing.'

1875, observes:—"I wrote to Rev. Mr. O'Shaughnessy's successor, near Gort, on the subject of your letter. He has no doubt that Rev. Mr. O'Shaughnessy, P. P., Beagh, which adjoins Gort, was the party referred to by Mr. Lever. Father O'Shaughnessy lived in the outskirts of Gort. He was a most hospitable man, of excellent conversational powers, with a mind well stored with knowledge, and of very gentlemanly address and manners. This clergyman also says that he heard Rev. Mr. O'Shaughnessy say he had Lever the novelist once at his house. This clearly shows he was the Dean O'Shaughnessy referred to by Mr. Lever. Although not actually possessing the title, he may been called so from courtesy."

Father O'Shaughnessy, who died on the 21st of April, 1857, had for some time previously, owing to ill-health, resigned his parish. He was a favourite with the military quartered in Gort, and no unfrequent guest at their mess. The Rev. M. Conolly, Mr. O'Shaughnessy's successor, cannot believe that he ever called himself "Dean." "But," he adds, "I can account for the mistake on the part of Mr. Lever in this way. The Protestant Dean of Kilmacduagh was then living in Gort, and the Parish Priest of Kilmacduagh, in which Gort is, was sometimes called Dean through courtesy, as it had once been a Deanery; one might then readily conceive that Mr. Lever, meeting Father O'Shaughnessy in Gort, and entertaining so favourable an opinion of him, looked upon him as the Parish Priest of Gort, and Kilmacduagh, and Dean of the latter.

"'Oh, I know,' cried I, 'that stupid story of Father D'Arcy and the Pope.'" *

"'No, no, not that; we laughed at that as much as any Protestant of you all. What we could not bear so well was an ugly remark you made in "Lorrequer," where there was a row at a wake and the money was scattered over the floor, you say the priest gathered more than his share, because—and here was the bitterness—old habit had accustomed him to scrape up his coin in low places! Now, Mr. Lever, that was not fair; it was not generous, surely.' †

"The good temper and the gentlemanlike quietness of the charge made me very uncomfortable at the time, and now after many years I recall the incident to show the impression it made on me, the only atonement I can make for the flippancy."

Lever does not say, though a letter to Mr. Hayman does, that at Gort the temperance band, by direction of the authorities ecclesiastic and otherwise—gave him

* The Abbé Darray, not Darcy, is the name employed by Lever in Chapter VI. of "Lorrequer." It will be remembered that in reply to the sentinel's challenge and "click," preparatory to firing, Father Darray, with painful reluctance, gave the password, "B—— end to the Pope; and may the saints in Heaven forgive me for saying it." Some have supposed that the hero of this incident—which is said to have occurred at Maynooth—may have been Dr. Anglade, the eminent French Professor there, but Dr. Anglade was not appointed till 1802, and the date assigned to the occurrence is 1798, when old Lever was engaged in completing his contract for works connected with the new College. Its records show that one of the professors at that time, was really an Abbé Darré, a native of the diocese of Auch, South of France. Mr. Innes, who heard old Lever tell the story a hundred times, will have more to say about it later on.

† The entire scene was a fancy sketch, see vol. i., p. 144.

a serenade, playing all the songs in "O'Malley"; and that he made a speech by moonlight, and asked them all to tea in the big parlour of the inn; where the rascals made discord for full two hours more, till every traveller—laymen and all—cursed the very name of "Lorrequer" and his admirers. He revisited the scenes endeared to him by old association—especially in Clare. Finding himself at Ennis he called on Dr. Cullinan, his companion in collegiate study and hospital practice. "That day," writes the doctor, "he read aloud for me a letter just received from a man with a foreign name, who wrote to Lever threatening him for having introduced him as a character in one of his books, and in an unfavourable way. Lever never knew the man, or had previously even heard of him. The same thing happened to Dickens in reference to the character of Squeers." With the exception of one call which he meant to make from the first, Lever had no settled plan of progress. Shebeen houses only could be found in some wild districts he penetrated, and the experience of one or two in sultry weather led him to say, alluding to Sir R. Kane's book, "As to Industrial Resources, flea-hunting might employ a province." But ere long he found that parts of Italy were still more open to the sarcasm.

The formal visit which he projected was one of duty and gratitude. The veteran authoress, Maria Edgeworth, had written to Lever some letters which had done him a world of good. Affecting to be critical, they were

laudatory all the while. But they need not be printed here. Delicately artful little objections are answered; difficulties no sooner detected than explained away; fears were expressed where a more trenchant critic had been condemnatory, and hope was excited evidently to cheer and encourage. All this was done with a playful and sportive yet tender spirit the most fascinating. Sir Walter Scott's name too was thrown out with a flattery that led Lever to say, "it was like talking to some votary of a penny lottery about speculating in railroad shares or exchequer bills." He could not for the soul of him think that such flattery did harm, though he confessed it was intoxicating, whether because he had met so little of it, or that his spirit had oftener been chafed by replying to unjust attacks than gratified by praise.

It was the success of this lady's writings which Scott has confessed, first led him to follow her example as a novelist; and Lever was naturally much elated by the cordially expressed "God speed" of the fair veteran. He visited her at Edgeworthstown and received a renewal of her good wishes. Lever declared that his head was actually turned, and that he was reduced like Molière's character, who did not know he had been talking prose all his life. *He* must have been something clever without suspecting it.

Lever looked back with pleasure to the time he had spent in the West with Maxwell as guide; and he now made a special visit to Mayo to renew acquaintance with

its scenery, and lay up the germ of future fruit. At Westport he met Dr. Burke, now Local Government Inspector, who, at the inn, pointed out the room where a duel had been fought by two attorneys, under most comical circumstances. They had quarrelled at the Sessions, and their seconds, who were wags, loaded the pistols with squibs of gunpowder and red currant jelly. Their, horror, on firing, to find their brains, as they thought, dashed about, presented a picture full of comicality, which Lever noted but, strange to say, never used. On the occasion of this visit to Mayo he mentioned to Dr. Burke an incident connected with the same trip illustrative of the innate wit of the peasantry. At "The Sound Hotel" on the Island of Achill, where Lever stopped, he was waited upon by a woman, half-scullion, half-butler, whose hand, when bringing in the tea-pot, shook tremulously. Lever, with professional instinct, humanely noticed the infirmity, saying, "I am sorry to see, Biddy, that you have a weakness in your hand." "Oh, your honour," she replied, with a glance of indescribable humour, "the wakeness is not in my hand, but inside in the tay-pot." "The Sound Hotel," we may add, was famous rather for the primitive purity of its milk than for the strength of its decoctions. Lever had visited at the same time the interesting Lodge near Westport, occupied then and now by Lord John Browne, brother of the Marquis of Sligo. The retired naval officer, true to the passion of his youth, has fitted up the rooms of this Lodge so as to resemble the cabin of a ship. In

"The Knight of Gwynne," a description of it will be found, but unaccompanied by any confession as to the source from which he drew it.

The dark side of the glorious picture of Killarney is that robe of rain which too often drapes the landscape. Grattan, in 1782, having arrived on a visit to Mr. Herbert there, found it inconvenient to leave the house, owing to the thick mist which fell on all sides. He was told it was only a Killarney shower. Grattan is said to have at last left Muckross without seeing the lakes. Years after, in the Irish House of Commons, he said to Herbert, "Is that Killarney shower yet over?" It was Lever's fate to visit Kerry under the disadvantageous circumstances which drew forth Grattan's irony: and he dealt upon it at parting a severely supercilious glance, but accompanied by an ebullition of such humour that the sketch may be given as a bit of pleasant autobiography. This visit to Killarney, however, wet as it was, had the effect of stimulating to growth the germ of a new tale which had nestled in his fertile fancy; what he says in print must be taken *cum grano*. Before the weather broke he strongly praised the picturesque grandeur of the lakes, which far surpass, he said, those of Cumberland; and told Mr. Hayman that he was wild about taking a cottage on the Upper Lake, and turning guide, if other trades should fail.

Of a sudden down came the rain, and thereupon he vowed that Sir Robert Kane should have included umbrella making among the "industrial resources of

Ireland ; " never was there such a market as in that land of rain! Other jokes, not in the printed paper, were said. Since his arrival it had oozed down three additional Lakes of Killarney, which only waited for another Mrs. S. C. Hall to be described and sailed on like the prototypes. He told McGlashan that as he sat in an oil-silk under Torc Mountain, he longed for old Templeogue, and would rather see big Sam O'Sullivan himself than O'Sullivan's cascade. Not long after, big Sam died ; and the circle who had delighted in him felt that a fine mountain had been removed from the landscape! The Rev. Samuel O'Sullivan, chaplain to the Hibernian school, was one of Lever's staunchest friends.

Lever sent to the magazine * a paper, which comically described his progress at Killarney. It was written not to ridicule the country, but "twaddling tourists," who had flooded the market with guide books," he said to McGlashan : " I hope we shall be able to keep poachers off the Manor, by a few papers of the kind. If tourists come now, they have got notice of man-traps and spring-guns. He did not like their effort to make the lakes a matter of spectacle, to be seen in a particular light, with Denny Somebody's cracked trumpet as an accompaniment. The paper begins by saying that " everybody has

* The foreman to the late Mr. Folds, printer of the " University Magazine," tells us that during Lever's connection with it 4000 copies a-month were regularly struck off. " Dea's " circulation largely diminished from the time of Lever's retirement. From the schedule of Mr. McGlashan's assets, it appeared that the entire Irish circulation of the magazine did not exceed three hundred copies.

expatiated on the various beauties of the scenery; there is not a loose stone nor a legend has been left unturned. But let no fascinations of little green-bound volumes seduce you. No guides to the gap! No handbooks to the lakes! Fly them all. If you must have O'Donoghue, take him fresh and fasting.

"The first requisite of a traveller is to adapt his dress and costume to the climate where he journeys. Provide yourself, therefore with a glazed hat, with falling leaf behind, vulgarly called a sou'wester; an oil-cloth cloak, with overalls to match; cork-soled shoes, of vast thickness; and, if you dislike the drizzling rain in your face, a strong cotton umbrella. Two shirts of thick canvas, to bear being washed on the stones of a river without injury, are also necessary, thread stockings, and a bag to contain halfpence for the various beggars you meet. So much for dress. As to the guide, you might as well affect a partiality for one shilling in the midst of twenty pounds in silver. Each resembles the other exactly,—has the same look, gesture, and manner,—the same description. Take the first that offers; and as to a pony, 'like case, like rule,'—they all go off with the wrong leg; all hang their heads, and all are groggy." Lever having breakfasted heartily and laughed immoderately at the drolleries of Jerry, is accosted—

"'A heavenly day, your honour. 'Tis a mist, sir, that's over the hills, but it won't signify.'

"You ascend Mangerton; a visionary outline of a mounted guide precedes you, dimly seen through the

drift, stones, rocks, heath and ferns alternate on the footway; nothing but rain above. Rain—rain—rain, pouring, seething, crashing, dashing, pelting, pitiless rain—rain that comes straight and slanting, and horizontal,—peppers on your hat and puddles at your feet, rain that penetrates every fold of your garments, and your skin itself, and becomes a constituent of your very blood, chilling and refrigerating the marrow of your bones; rain that would melt even Father Matthew to a dram—comes sweltering down, and ceases not; but 'on and on, till day is gone,' you plod your weary way. You must do Mangerton, and there is nothing for it but perseverance; hours pass over, dreary hours they are, relieved though they be by guide narratives of illustrious victims who have made the ascent in times past; and at last, shivering and sad, the beast halts, and you are told the summit is reached. 'Won't your honour see the Devil's Punch Bowl?' 'What's in it?' 'Water, to be sure.' 'I ought to have guessed; anyone else would have had something comfortable in such a place. No, I'll go back as fast as I can.' And down you go—down—down—down—through slippery moss and brittle shingle, every step of the beast causing a land-slip of half an acre of small pebbles; and thus sliding, and stumbling, and scrambling, and perhaps swearing, you reach the valley once more. Five mortal hours of hard labour endured, your garments destroyed, your temper ruffled; but you've done your Mangerton, and that's something, and now for a little refreshment. How gratefully you sip sherry that might test gold from

its acid properties; how you relish the chicken you drove over with your car in the morning, and how you enjoy the inimitable Jerry. Arrivals come at every moment, wet and dripping men, who stand, when they descend, as if to be rained on a little longer; and then fumble their humid fingers into spongy pockets to catch a damp sixpence for the driver."

That night he lugubriously penned a series of stanzas, beginning—

"I think the Lakes
Are no great shakes;
They're overdone with Blarney;
Their bugles, boats,
Their guides and goats,
Have quite destroyed Killarney."

These were the lucubrations of a pleasant caterer for the light feeders of literature who love a dash from the cruet-stand, to whet their zest. In point of fact, it was this tour to the South which raised that flood of thought in which "The O'Donoghue" was planned and penned. Lever's last preface to this novel—dated 1872—states that he began it "at a little inn at Killarney, and I believe I stole the name of Kerry O'Leary from one of the boatmen on the lake—the only theft in the book. I believe that the very crude notions of an English tourist for the betterment of Ireland, and some exceedingly absurd comments he made on the habits of people which an acquaintanceship of three weeks enabled him to pronounce on, provoked me to draw the character of Sir Marmaduke, but I can declare that the traveller

aforesaid only acted as tinder to a mine long prepared, and afforded me a long sought-for opportunity—not for exposing, for I did not go that far—but for touching on the consummate effrontery with which a mere passing stranger can settle the difficulties and determine the remedies for a country, wherein the resident sits down overwhelmed by the amount, and utterly despairing of a solution."

Lever never forgot the wretched weather that hailed his visit to Killarney; but the magazine account, like its clouds, is overcharged. Long after, in his apology for a preface to "The Martins," he spoke of having once ascended a hill at Killarney to see the sun rise, and watch the effects the breaking day should throw on the landscape. Masses of cloud and mist obscured every object; and it was only at intervals that a ray of light, piercing the darkness, afforded a glance of a scene full of interest. The guide, however, pointed to where Mangerton was supposed to stand, Torc, the Waterfall, and Muckross Abbey, and eloquently described the features of the landscape. Lever modestly confessed that in introducing "The Martins" to his readers, he found himself in a position resembling that of the guide. The various objects which he had hoped and promised himself to present, had been displayed faintly, feebly, or not at all.

He found better weather elsewhere. With Glengariff he was greatly pleased; Glenflesk charmed him. Beneath the blue vault which spans that wildly picturesque region

and the warm rays of a genial sun, the fine creations of "O'Donoghue"—long in embryo, as he said—emerged from his brain in prolific vitality. The scenes he saw are sketched with beauty and power; that of Glenflesk being specially fine.

Googane-Barra, good-bye! Fine as the scenes were, he was not sorry to get back again to his own fireside, and to the close companionship of Mortimer O'Sullivan, whose talk constituted, he said, the acme of social enjoyment.*

In urging the Rev. Samuel Hayman to come on a visit to him at his "Château de Templeogue," he described it as built by the Templars, the walls six feet in thickness, and the whole sustained by an arched cavern of one hundred feet in extent, and so early a date as to be turned on a wicker centre. His château had also a Flemish cascade; not one of the boisterous, rollicking, harum-scarum things called waterfalls, but a solid, steady, and discreet fall, coming heavily down, step by step, some hundred yards in the midst of a large meadow.

"He told me," writes Mr. Hayman, "to come by the Kilkenny day-coach, which passed his gate at Templeogue, and not to go on to Dublin, five miles further. This, he said, would be merely adding insult to injury, as

* A voice long hushed—we believe O'Sullivan's—whispers:—"One little room rises to recollection, with its quaint sideboard of carved oak, its dark brown cabinets—curiously sculptured,—its heavy old brocade curtains, and all its queer devices of knick-knackery, where such meetings were once held; and where, throwing off the cares of life, shut out from them, as it were, by the massive folds of the heavy drapery across the door, we talked in all the fearless freedom of old friendship."

O'Grady remarked when the gentleman said his name was O'Shaughnessy O'Shaughnessy! Lever awaited me at his gate, and hailed the coachman with, 'Anyone for me?' 'Yes! Mr. Lever,' was the reply, and I descended to receive a heart-warm welcome. 'You sat by the coachman,' said Lever; 'and do you know who he is?' 'No; Fletcher, Lord Byron's *valet*, who ministered to him so faithfully on his death-bed at Missolonghi.' I thought it very nice and delicate of Lever to say, as we walked together to the house, 'We have no one to dine to-day in the way of visitors. We want to know you, and we want you to know us, and this evening shall be all our own. To-morrow I have invited a few lions to meet you. Some day further, we shall have the menagerie, monkeys, mocking birds, parrots and all.'

"I passed some time very happily with him. He kept quite a stud of horses. How often Lever and I have ridden in together to Curry's in Dublin to meet literary friends, and gossip with them; and then in the evening to have charming reunions at his house. At the last dinner I partook of there, we had Archer Butler, Butt, Whiteside, Wilde, Petrie, Anster, Longfield, and McGlashan, and I know not how many more. Almost all have passed away since. *Sic vita!*

"Riding with Lever one day through the city, I was pleased to observe the popularity he evidently enjoyed. Many would stop and gaze at him, and 'Harry Lorrequer' would be faintly borne to us amid the street noise and

bustle. Passing the entrance of a riding-school, the owner, a naturalised Frenchman, grinned and grimaced at us. 'Ah! Monsieur Lever, it was not quite fair to laugh at me en votre playsante storie.' 'Do you remark that fine non-commissioned officer?' asked Lever, as we rode through Dame Street. 'Yes! but who is he?' 'Graham! Sergeant Graham of the Coldstreams; he who, with his officers, Macdonnell, Wyndham, Gooch, and Harvey, closed by sheer strength the gate of Hougoumont; and, when they had no other barriers, made themselves the living props to fasten the doorway against the French cavalry. An English clergyman wrote to the Duke of Wellington, saying he would give £10 a year to the man the Duke considered the bravest at Waterloo. The reply was that these five men were equally entitled to the honour. The officers waived their right in Graham's favour."

As a *raconteur* he was marvellous. In descriptive vivacity every feature took a part, even to his nose, which seemed to enjoy a life of its own; and it was said of him that his rich anecdotes fell like ripe fruit from an overladen tree. It was not by his 'musical laugh' alone that Lever contributed to genial harmony. As a singer he far surpassed Moore in choral power, though wanting in his wonderful graces of expression. He eschewed toasts generally, but in one he sometimes indulged. He deemed it meet that they should pledge one toast to the mutual mistress of their vows,—*The Magazine!* and "with it one whose unflinching zeal had stood the

test of the dark hour of storm and wreck — Jem McGlashan."

This "Gem," as he called him, was the only bookseller he ever praised. "At one of our dinners," adds Hayman, "he proposed the memory of Bonaparte. Asked why, he replied, 'Because he shot a bookseller. Aye, gentlemen, they drink their wine out of authors' skulls.'*

"The last time I dined in his house was at one of Lever's 'Menagerie feeds,'—all the D. U. M. writers, great and small, were present. Lever told, with infinite drollery, that a little before, at a similar festival, the Scot, fearing to be made 'fou' by the wild Irish authors and scribblers, left the previous dinner at which he was present to join the ladies in the drawing-room. After a while, the company heard unearthly noises in the pantry, just behind the dining-room. They listened, and they wondered. What could it be? Were there really ghosts in the house? as had been whispered in its ancient traditions. But, summoning courage, they went *en masse*, and they found that worthy McGlashan had, under the impression that he was going upstairs to the

* "A passage in one of Thackeray's writings," observes Major D—— "always seemed to me to point to Lever. It is to the effect that authors very often complain of being badly paid and not well treated by publishers, and that they have only themselves to blame. This passage has often recurred to my memory, because it reads hard and narrow. Writers of fiction, like Lever, Thackeray, and others, have really no right to complain; but writers on history and many other branches of literature that require great labour and much time are not in many instances fairly remunerated. I dare say Thackeray never thought of such people when he wrote down his dictum." "True;" Lever once said, "the men who make history have not any very high estimation of the men who write it."

ladies, ascended shelf after shelf of the pantry, and was now lying at full length on the uppermost, kicking furiously at the ceiling and side-walls, and expressing the utmost surprise that he 'could not get upstairs.' They were sober as judges. He, I need not say, despite his being a cannie Scot, and his efforts to avoid any excess, WAS—'fou.'

McGlashan caught cold after this comic incident, and was attended by both Graves and Marsh. Lever pleasantly rallied the patient, told him to get rid of the doctors, and to spit the feathers from his mouth, and come and munch beef at Templeogue—adding the impromptu—

> "The Devil take the chemists, the Woolastons and Faradays:
> They only teach to torture men with cupping and cantharides."

When Templeogue was *en fête*, and Lever enacted the host to his literary staff, he always placed himself central at the table, with Mrs. Lever immediately opposite, a guest whom he desired particularly to honour on his own right hand, and the next-to-be-distinguished visitor on his left. The head and foot of the table were delegated to old reviewers, like the O'Sullivans, who thus managed the carving as adroitly as they had cut up in other ways. Lever thus placed was free to attend to guests—to enliven the repast with his own droll sayings, and to stir up repartee in others. Dining à la Russe had not then extended itself to Ireland.

No end of anecdotes continued to flow. Referring to

the period of his residence in Ulster, he told the following with much archness apropos of Butt, who was present. "Wha is misther Butt doin noo," said a north of Ireland country woman, just as he, then a youth from Ulster, was earning distinction for himself in the University and at the bar. "Butt is professor of political economy in the Dublin College." "Aiconomy! aiconomy! Weel 'tis nae bad thing, if it doant descend to maneness." "We were all amused at the idea," adds Hayman, "that Butt of all men would practise economy.

"I well remember how he brightened one dark November day by an unceasing flow of graphic utterances, of which the few mems I have preserved convey no adequate idea. But though accused of being a monologist, he was not so. Of Mortimer O'Sullivan, whom he wished me to meet, he said, 'I cannot tell you what a boon such conversation as his is, nor how rich and varied are the stores of his information, nor how full of afterthought his opinions ever are. You, I know, would delight in him; to my thinking he has not his equal for that eloquence of the fireside, which eclipses even his public orations; and to *hear* him after *reading* about Johnson, or Coleridge, or any of your regularly professional talkers, is really to grieve that no Boswell lives to chronicle the most elegant, far-seeing, and eloquent conversationist of our day.'

"When in the Tyrol, he wrote to me that the postman's ring was a sound as welcome as the dinner-bell. But not so at Templeogue. 'No man, barring a dog or an editor,'

he said, 'could live under the heap of abuse the daily post opens upon me in avalanches; every letter of the alphabet indignantly asking why I have not published the tale, essay, poem, puff, song, review, or satire, and why I have not had the common politeness to reply. From A, B, C, to X, Y, Z, there is a rebellion against me. I have not a friend left in the whole heathen mythology. The ancients have cut me dead: Artemis, Arienus, Chloe, Clio, Melibœus, Juverna, and Irenæus, with "Puss-in-the-Corner," scorn and despise me; and "Fair Dealers," "Constant Readers," "Old Subscribers," "Friends of the Magazine," "Contributors to the best Reviews," and "Country Readers," call me by names on which I might retire from business to-morrow, and live on actions for defamation for the rest of my days. In all seriousness I do not exaggerate, and the result is, while I labour on in fruitless apologies to rejected addresses, I have no time to write to my real friends and disarm their disgust at the atrocities of my silent system. If I were, as you erroneously suspect, an industrious fellow, all would be well; but my rule of never doing to-day what can possibly be deferred till to-morrow is occasionally the source of some confusion, and latterly I have taken a fit of dining out, for the reason chiefly that I happen to have a new coat, and I really do nothing but grumble over the work before me and wonder what I am to do for a new plot. I believe, however, that books write themselves, and that sitting down with a title before me and a well-nibbed pen are the only essentials; and in this I confide

for the performance of my pledges for the year of grace '44.'

"Flatterers he found in shoals to tell him that 'Tom Burke'—then about to end after a long monthly issue—was his best book. But I steadily held that "O'Leary" deserved the palm.* Lever observed a short silence, and said—'The vast interval between promise (even when made to one's own heart) and performance makes me feel that I have failed where I hoped I should have succeeded. I intended to have exhibited a picture of France at a period when the prestige of a monarchy had given way to the feudalism of a military state, and where the great prizes, long limited to birth and station, were thrown open for the competition of all, engendering the tremendous struggle for distinction which originated acts of heroism and devotion unequalled in history. To depict this, and to show the lights and shadows of French military life and the contrast of our own, was also my object. I forgot my plan sometimes; sometimes my characters had a will of their own, and would go their own way; and oftener, again, I found I was endeavouring what neither my powers were equal to, nor would meet approval if done; so that my book became a tesselated structure, or rather a patchwork quilt made of shreds and fragments thrown together without regard to colour or shape or unity of design.

* Lever had submitted several of the proofs of "O'Leary" to Hayman. In sending the last sheets—which he called the winding sheets—he asked him would he *undertake* "The Remains of Arthur O'Leary." This title was finally relinquished.

But I bore you about my long sail. I am so happy to see land that I grow prosy over the incidents of the voyage. And now for a ride. I see Pioche at the door rearing like a unicorn!'

These excursions he found specially enjoyable. In the magazine he wrote: "Few cities, I scarcely know of one—can boast of such environs as Dublin. The scenery, diversified in its character, possesses attraction for almost every taste; the woody glade—the romantic river—the wild and barren mountain—the cultivated valley—the waving upland. The bold and rocky coast—broken with promontory and island—are all to be found even within a few miles of the capital."

"Tom Burke" continued to make his monthly bow until August, 1844, when Lever brought his evolutions to an end at Killarney, after, as he said, a hard night's work. During the tour which his physician prescribed as a relaxation, he had been looking out for an opportunity to do this, but could not find a quiet spot to close the career of "the soldier tired." His habit was, towards the finale of his books, to write a short chapter to account for and whip in all the lost sheep of his story. At Lismore, where he essayed the task, he was obliged to desist, owing to the stentorian yells in Irish beneath his window. The vernacular tongue, he said, seemed to require the loudest powers of voice to give it energy, and the very pigs themselves were mute before its tones.

McGlashan urged him to lengthen "Tom Burke;" but, after a long deliberation, his final resolve was that to any

additional matter would apply the charge of drawing out, more fatal to the book than the fault of abruptness.

"A parting word," omitted in all later editions and written in very depressed spirits, confesses that what ought to have been an occupation full of interest and amusement to himself turned out a task of labour and anxiety.

The sensation feats * accomplished by "Tom Burke" were, on the whole, well received in England; and led his critics to say that if Lever rode up to St. Paul's as if by accident, he would clear the dome, ball and cross, so neatly, that when, two minutes later, we meet him ambling down Cheapside, one cannot conceive that aught sensational or daring had been attempted. They recognised this quality of nerve to be as great a quality in an author as in a dragoon.

Lever told Hayman that in introducing Grattan into "Tom Burke," he followed the example set by an Italian artist who, when painting a scene of wild imagination descriptive of the last Judgment, placed in the group striking portrait of a well-known cardinal to make the rest real. The graver parts were effectively relieved by the gay. The examination of "Darby the Blast" as a witness in court is a capital companion picture to the examination of Sam Weller in "Pickwick."

Hitherto Lever had been limited by the Shannon in his portraitures of the Irish country gentry. The South now

* These are satirised by Thackeray in "Phil Fogarty, a tale of the onety oneth," which describes, among other hair-breadth escapes, the hero a close prisoner within the French lines, but, by one vigorous leap clean over the heads of Napoleon and his staff, is found next moment free.

received attention at his hands; and in executing his task he combined the movement and dramatic energy of "O'Malley" with the deeper feeling and higher sentiment of "Tom Burke." The "O'Donoghue" was a domestic story of Irish life, "in which the evil influences, so long the bane and misery of Ireland," were strongly portrayed. The period embraced the memorable invasion of the French and the arrival of their fleet at Bantry, many details of which Lever learned in the course of his visit to the South. This episode gave the book a zest for French critics, one of whom "sneered at my making a poor peasant-child find pleasure in the resonance of a Homeric verse; but I could tell him of barefooted boys in the South, running errands for a scanty subsistence, with a knowledge of classic literature which would puzzle many a gowned student to cope with. If the 'improbabilities' went no further than this, it would have been more grateful to the conscience of the author."

"O'Donoghue" was the outcome of Lever's trip to Kerry, and in some reviews of it received hits as hard as those which he had himself dealt out to Killarney.*

* To McGlashan he entered into a vindication of the book and of himself, in reply to the charge of "Repealism." For the life of him he could not detect it. Certain of the characters were not conspicuous for loyalty, it was true; but if they were all staunch Tories, he was not sure the book would be more readable. If one could get rid of agrarian crime and trading patriotism, there was plenty for an Irishman to be proud of. The old Tories, however, had divided Ireland and cried it down; and as Wesley said that the Church left all the good music to the Devil, so the Tory aristocracy left all the nationality, all the unction and fervour of fatherland, to the dare-devils of democracy. He added modestly that, with the little ability

The eighth number brought him to a critical stage in his story, uncertain whether to turn off by a by-way, or go straight to the end along the high-road. He told McGlashan that he might have "O'Donoghue" warm with love, or cold without, as might seem best to befit the temper and taste of their readers. He could wind up with Demosthenic abruptness in eleven numbers, the curtain falling amid the blue lightning and thunder that scattered the French fleet, &c.; or he could go on to a more Colburn and Bentley ending, with love and marriage licences, in thirteen numbers. McGlashan had paid his money, and he might take his choice. For himself, like Fusbos in "Bombastes Furioso,"—

> "So long, great sir, as we your favours claim,
> Short cut, or long—to us 'tis all the same."

McGlashan hesitated, and sought inspiration and breathing time in prolonged pinches of snuff. Lever returned to the charge. He could not go on. He knew not whether he was to make a *robe de chambre* or a spencer; he could not put a stitch in the garment till he heard from him. Lever felt that a tragic ending would

he could command, he had tried to bring Irish gentlemen into better repute, not by exaggerated pictures of good qualities so much as by correct delineation of the state of society in which they lived, where there were abundant apologies for many failings; and also by pictures of the condition of a country where, whatever its faults, most of its best features had their origin in the native high-mindedness, cordial warmth, and genial good-feeling of the Irish gentleman. He was well sick of apologies for his undertakings, as McGlashan must have been at hearing them, but although he never did and never would court the Press, he felt all the disadvantage of being continually misrepresented without one to say a word in his favour.

suit the story and its object best. McGlashan feared the young ladies. At last the author agreed to let them take it out in love as compensation.

Lever had never taken so much pains to succeed as now, so he hoped that virtue would have its reward. But the third number was pooh-poohed notwithstanding; which led him to say that shilling purchasers were only sixpenny critics, and he was well accustomed to hear the bad extolled, and the better condemned. Would it not be well, by way of giving a fillip to "O'Donoghue," to say it would end in twelve numbers? The public would at least see land, and that was something. McGlashan suggested a completion in eleven numbers; but Lever feared that, after laying down a wide foundation, the top of his pyramid would be dwarfed. He had never felt disposed to be long-winded; and generally, before he had half done with his characters, was as tired of them as the most savage of his critics. If he found, then, that they could all come to a suitable destiny at the eleventh hour, so be it; if not, he might make a baker's dozen and finish in December; at all events, they should not pop their heads into the new year. Ere long, a French translation of "O'Donoghue" in "Le Siècle" attested its success.

A mistake occurred in connection with one of the illustrations to "O'Donoghue," too amusing not to claim mention here. Phiz, in an apologetic letter, fears that the rather long and comical title to one of the serious designs must have annoyed Lever not a little. "As to

myself, when I saw it I was convulsed with laughter. I do not know whether to attribute the mistake to the carelessness, stupidity, inebriety, or the practical-joking peculiarities of the writing engraver. I think it is a compound. Orr sent to me for a title to the plate; and as I was rather at a loss how to name the child, I wrote on a slip of paper thus:—1. 'Mark recognises an old acquaintance;' or simply 2. 'The Glen;' or (addressing Orr) 'anything else you like, my little dears'—meaning that Orr might give a better if he could;—and behold! the writing engraver makes a Chinese copy of the whole!"

Phiz adds: "Dickens is about to edit a new newspaper to extinguish, but at the same time enlighten the *Times*, spifflicate the *Chronicle*, pull down the *Standard*, hough the *Herald*, smash the *Courier*, gouge the *Observer*, and astonish *John Bull!*" *

Professor Wilson's writings in "Blackwood" had at first suggested to Lever the ambition of authorship, the "Noctes" being the earliest recreation of his school-boy days. He was anxious to dedicate "O'Donoghue" to him; but not knowing "Kit," as he called him, told a

* Mr. Hablot Browne, in a kind letter, wishing us all success, writes:—"Living as he did abroad, our correspondence was generally confined to the etchings we had on at the time. Some years ago when I was about to remove from Croydon, I had a bonfire to lessen the lumber, and burnt a stock of papers containing all Lever's, Dickens', Ainsworth's, and other authors' notes, as they were almost solely about illustrations. I did not at the time attach any importance to them, nor did I think that any one else would; but I was afterwards blamed by several autograph collectors for my wilful destruction of what they considered valuable."

friend to ask permission. He feared, however, that Christopher North might never have heard of him, and he could endure a refusal and a rap of an ebony crutch in the distance without wincing. Lever knew swells enough, but not a single clever one; and he was resolved to let his bantling go without a godfather, rather than give him a fool for sponsor. Should Wilson's opinion of the book, if favourable, transpire, he hoped to hear it. Even his blame would be so far acceptable that it was something to profit by. Wilson consented in very flattering terms. Lever acknowledged the compliment through his friend: that, in the haste of moving into a new house, with a carpet on his back and a chest of drawers on his head, he was flabbergasted how to express the proper sense of the thing.

Lever rented, for a season, Oatlands, Stillorgan, facing the Priory, where resided Mr. P—— M——, whose character Lever had etched with cutting lines in "Jack Hinton." The daily *rencontres* between them, in the rural seclusion of Stillorgan, were at first fraught with awkwardness; but both were men of the world, and they at last not only got used to it but became friends. Lever and his wife visited at the Priory, and more than once dined there.

A fat German who acted as cook, valet, and sometimes as coachman, served Lever at Oatlands. "One evening," writes Sir W. Wilde, "I arrived in my green gig to spend a few hours with Lever; and while I and other friends were sitting together enjoying Lever's

sallies, another gig, driven by Mr. Kildahl, the house-agent, came to the door. He wished to see Lever regarding the rent of the place, and sent in his card with that object. The Teutonic man-of-all-work was at once deputed to mind the gig, while Mr. Kildahl joined the group within. In a few minutes the fat German entered the room, and, making a profound obeisance, said impassively, 'Das pferd ist durchgegauger,' which means, of course, 'The horse has run away.' Lever laughed immoderately, so did I; and so infectious was the merriment that Kildahl laughed immoderately too, though without the remotest idea that the laugh had been at his own expense. Kildahl's consternation at discovering the real facts may be conceived. The run-away horse and gig dashed down the steep hill of Stillorgan until all came to a dead smash at Galloping-Green, the fragments being there gathered up and sent back to Dublin on a float. The German, who was perhaps more *au fait* as a cook, we found to be a great proficient at making a woodcock-pie. He never appeared to such fine advantage as when submerging ten or twelve of the birds in a rich gravy of truffles, and serving up the dainty dish for supper."

CHAPTER II.

Affair of honour with Mr. S. C. Hall and others—Mr. Hall's recollections—How Surgeon-General Sir Philip Crampton cured Lever of monologue—The Menagerie Dinners—Tiff with Archbishop Whately—A stinging retort—"Threatens to cut the cable," and leave Ireland.—"Blue-devilled."

The outward world supposed that Lever filled a chair as easy as was ever shaken by Rabelais, but it far from proved at all times enjoyable. Thorns often pushed their way through its seemingly luxurious padding. Their points on one or two occasions attained the formidable dimensions of a sword of challenge, and nearly entailed on our editor fatal consequences.

Party feeling ran high. Repeal was ripped open by some iron pen in the magazine; and a paper appeared charging Mr. S. C. Hall—a Conservative and an Englishman—who had expressed some Liberal views towards Ireland, with having been bought. It also accused him of having written "a wantonly wicked production." The paper was not Lever's; but, as nominal editor, he made himself responsible for it. Mr. Hall, stung to the quick, addressed to him a letter in which he said that "the savage assault, while in England it

will excite disgust, I am sure no single reader in Ireland will consider justified by any act or word of mine. Your 'criticism' will no doubt be read, where my 'letter' will not be seen; yet I trust, I am too well known to feel much alarm lest you should succeed—by interpolating sentences, perverting facts, and 'twisting' words—in making me appear odious in the estimation of a party with whom I have always acted, the enemy of things I hold sacred, the adversary of a cause I revere, the hater of principles I have been all my life striving to extend and establish.

"Your publishers say, I have had more experience than you have had in the duties and responsibilities of an editor: I never knew so gross a departure from the just, honourable, and honest course; never saw more conclusive evidence of a spirit unbecoming a gentleman and a man of letters than in your criticism on my letter to 'Irish Temperance Societies.'

"It comes well, indeed, from a writer who, for about fifty months has been employed in slandering his native country and its people; labouring somewhat successfully to persuade the English public that every Irish gentleman is a blackguard, and every Irish peasant a ruffian."*

* Happily for Lever the historic judgment on his name is more lenient. An old organ of public opinion observes:—"Lever will always be best remembered by the loyal patriotism with which he loved to delineate the better qualities of Irish character,—a design in which he has been eminently successful."—"John Bull," No. 2687. The "Athenæum," in recording Lever's death, said, "He is no unworthy competitor with Banim, Carleton, or Griffin, in depicting middle-class or peasant life. Micky Free belongs to that class of characters which have immortalised the national novel."

. . . . . and whose editorial career has been notorious for disregard of courtesy and arrogance unparalleled."

Lever not only did not write the paper, but it is by no means certain that the MS. passed through his hands. In different letters he expressed strong dissatisfaction that the publisher should arrogate to himself editorial privileges.

Mr. Hall, a colonel's son, cradled in a barrack, who in swaddling clothes had smelt gunpowder, and had lived in duelling days, deemed it necessary for his wounded pride that Lever should be held amenable on the same principle that led Grantley Berkley to affront Fraser the publisher, and caused Maginn the editor to call him out to receive a ball in the heel of his boot.

A man who wrote so much about duelling was not likely to pocket such phrases as those levelled at him by Mr. Hall. The letter was sufficient to call Lever over to London and to call out Hall. The *rendezvous* was Chalk Farm, where Moore and Jeffrey had already met. Mr. S. C. Hall, who has been good enough to give us the particulars of this affair, goes on to say :—

"We never met: I never saw Lever: my friend on the occasion was Col. (then Major) Clerke: and my doctor was another—as he still lives, thank God, I do not name his name. I waited in a house near Chalk Farm for five or six hours—all alone. At the end of that time I found the matter had been referred for 'arbitration' to Lord Ranelagh (the present Lord); and I was asked if I would withdraw my letter, on Lever's expressing his con-

viction that I had not been bought—or in any way paid —for the work I had done. That I readily did; stating that, but for the unfounded and unjust statement, I never would have written such a letter at all. That settled the matter: we were not such fools as to shoot at one another —content with paper pellets of the brain. When Lord Ranelagh was parting with my friend he said (as I was told), 'I suppose this is the first time four Irishmen met to shoot an Englishman and didn't do it.' I returned home therefore to Mrs. Hall, who knew all about it, but to whom my honour was dear! I had made her a promise before I left home that morning, that I would not fight until after I had seen her again. And she accepted my word, and relied on it. A duel would have been an absurdity at that period; for, although the practice was not entirely dead, it was tolerated only when cases were desperate. And *we* did not swell the list of fools. I have not found a copy of the letter to Father Mathew (a man I have loved, honoured and venerated from that day to this), but I am sure it was not such as to justify the attack on me in the *Dublin University Magazine*. Age has, however, no doubt cooled my once hot blood; and I regret the bitter temper in which my letter to the editor was written."*

Though not specially acknowledged or remembered by Mr. S. C. Hall, there can, we think, be little doubt that Lever's paper on "Killarney and Twaddling Tourists"

* Letter of S. C. Hall, Esq., dated 50, Holland Street, Kensington, January 19, 1876.

struck him as a rude blow aimed at his wife. The guide whom Lever chiefly had in his eye was Sir John Carr, pungently satirised by Dubois in his "Pocket Book."

Lever, on the 20th Dec. 1844, wrote to Hayman saying that Mr. Hall's missive had cost him a trip to London at an hour's notice at a most inconvenient and inclement season; but, after much worry, Lord Ranelagh had brought him an apology; and so, like the King of France, he wandered back again to ruminate how he could have been mixed up in any affair with the Temperance leader, a phenomenon as puzzling as the action of thunder in the beer-cellar was to Mrs. Winifrid Jenkins. He declared he was fagged and sea-sick; rail-roaded and goaded to the door of death. When would he enjoy a modicum of peace. He wished with all his soul he knew Robinson Crusoe for a month! The good parson was further told that crushing headaches had ceased not to plague him for three months. He waited patiently and impatiently hoping to get better by idleness, but he had set about writing again in pure despair that rest could restore him.

Again we find him in hot water. "Apropos of Lever's duels, he had nearly fought one with Dr. K——," writes Canon Hayman, "anent K.'s memoir of Maginn in the D. U. M. The article was voluminous; and when it reached Lever's hands, he sat up all night wading through it. He reported it to McGlashan as libellous. Eighteen persons, from the Duke to Sam Lover, were insulted, and four distinctly actionable passages put forward coolly. Lever passed his pen through these

glaring personalities; yet one specially grave calumny at p. 74, perhaps because veiled in Greek, escaped detection. It ascribed Maginn's misfortunes to his wife, and never was the epigram of Philippides less appropriate. The memoir—modified—appeared in January, 1844, and two awkward results followed. K—— sent Lever a challenge for having struck out the passages he had deemed libellous; but as an *élève* of Maginn he had declined to affix his own name as the biographer of his chief, and Lever was himself set down as the writer of an article, inserted against his protest by McGlashan."* Maginn had given Lever some sharp cuts before his death, though he afterwards said he would borrow money to drink with him; and mutterers said, "Maginn has got from Lever a Roland for his Oliver, one of the sort which gives a new sting to death." Truly Lever's editorial senses became more sharpened every day.

Attaching himself to the obsolete school of Grattan and Toler, he continued to the end true to the trigger. One of his last papers, referring to the common practice of a duel in Grattan's day, declared that "Rude as this chivalry was, it reacted most favourably on manners; the courtesy of debate was never violated by any of those coarse contradictions and unseemly denials which lower parliamentary habits." He censured our legisla-

* Previous to this climax we find Lever telling McGlashan (Dec. 1843) that Dr. K——'s paper should go back to him with a request that he would expunge all the personalities—none of which were harmless—and few had any justification. Lever, in attempting to cut it down, found that his pruning-knife had struck to the root of the tree.

tion on duelling, and deprecated the adverse tone of public opinion in reference to the practice. In conclusion, he aimed to vindicate it by a long line of arguments, most of which have since lost their force, including, "Why is France at the head of Europe? simply because she is ready with the pistol."

Ne sutor ultra crepidam was shown in rows between one of Curry's publishing firm and Lever, consequent on a habit contracted by the former of intermeddling with the editorial department of the Magazine, and jockeying him, as he said, into the acceptance of very inferior papers.

The state of Lever's liver at this time too, did not tend to soothe the irritation he felt at this interference. To these and other points, letters to the Rev. Edward Johnson and Canon Hayman refer. Touching a new number of the Magazine then in process, he observed that he should feel so far easier if he could reckon on some of the crew being able-bodied seamen, and not the press-gang *canaille* that a bookselling boatswain would fain smuggle on board of his craft in his absence. He felt justly sore.

It was now one year since he had taken charge of the Magazine, and only within the last six weeks had he succeeded in freeing it of the *incubi* that had made it the heaviest in the Empire. The old men (men and women) no longer sat on Sinbad's back; and if not crouched down from long pressure, there was no reason why he should not walk the world with port erect and visage high hereafter. Hayman was assured, in con-

clusion, that his last letter was a better tonic than all the antacid mixtures and stomachic potions he had swallowed for weeks.

Lever found many thorns in the editorial chair; but amongst the pleasures of editorship, perhaps the greatest was when he recognised peculiar merit in some new writer and aided in its development. One of these was Mr. M. J. Barry, the able author of the "Kishoge Papers," and afterwards a police magistrate in Dublin. Lever enjoyed these pieces thoroughly; "but," modestly writes Mr. Barry, in a letter to be quoted more fully later on, "I fancy they were greatly over-rated. After the first zest of composition (which was generally at a white heat, for I wrote 380 lines of one between breakfast and dinner) I never thought anything of them myself." Lever invited him to Templeogue to meet Thackeray and other distinguished men; but Mr. Barry, in accounting to us for not being able to furnish more detail of intercourse, says that he was "then a very young, and, save with chums of my own standing, a very bashful man; and when present at a Magazine dinner, rather wondering how the d—— I got there, and shrank from rather than courted swells, literary or otherwise." Mr. Barry bears graceful testimony to Lever's charming qualities as a host, "bringing out every man, who could be brought out, at his best; and filling all gaps by his own boundless tide of anecdote and humour."* Other

* "He was a really clever and brilliant Irishman," Mr. Barry adds, "and one, too, who I think always wished to put forward the best traits of the

flowers, which seemed born to blush unseen, developed beneath the sunshine that Lever shed. To be in good strength for the entertainment of his guests he prepared himself generally by exercise in the open air. His medical education, if it produced no better fruit, proved of use by teaching him how to gain increased mental and bodily strength. To counteract the ill-effects of sedentary pursuits, he constantly rushed into the open air; sometimes riding with his schoolfellow Dr. Stoker, who having called one day at Templeogue House, found him, Sysiphus-like, hurling a large stone for an interminable number of times. Wine he took in moderation. "I once heard him say of a friend, who was unusually brilliant," writes Mr. Innes, "that he had been sherried up to the right point, adding 'An additional liqueur-glass would have spoiled him.'"

If Mr. Hall and others objected that some of Lever's sketches bordered upon caricature, Samuel Lover's critics complained, on the other hand, that his pictures of Irish life were too flattering; and to get rid of the objection, he wrote "Handy Andy," which has always been more popular than his fine dramatic novel "Rory O'More." It was only natural that Lover, being a portrait-painter by profession, should place his subjects in the best light. As a genuine poet, he had a loftier

Irish character, certainly not to trade on the degradation or misrepresentation of Irishmen. Many of his stories were cast in periods in which certain national failings were necessarily manifested pretty conspicuously, but there was always the wish to relieve them by the display of Irish generosity, Irish wit, Irish courage, and Irish genius."

ideal to realise than his more light-hearted fellow-Bursch Lever, who, when in the first exuberance of manhood, possessed so keen a perception of the ludicrous, that he could not resist seizing on all comical points; but his style toned down as he got older, and as shall be seen.

If Lever got good pay for the work he did during these few memorable years in Dublin, he more than lived up to it. We have seen him daily "on hospitable thoughts intent," but in domestic devotion he perhaps shone brightest. Charles Lever was fond of his children; braced and beaming and radiant with good humour, he daily rode out with two of them on ponies, a stout cob, sometimes a mettlesome charger, falling to his share. Attended by this tiny escort, and followed by a belted groom, he might be often seen traversing the streets of Dublin, where all four, attracting every eye, were familiar figures. The flowing auburn hair of his daughters, so ample and luxuriant that it well nigh seemed to cover each pony, was in itself a striking object. The latter aspect was presented on damp days, when the work of the curl-papers became Love's labour lost. All the family used papillotes—or as Lever called them, "the Evening Papers." Lever generally rode fast, and with the ease of one who knew how to manage his horse. But sometimes he would gratify the curiosity of his admirers by giving them an opportunity of scrutinising him more closely.

> "Careless he seems, yet vigilantly sly,
> Wooes the stray glance of ladies passing by,
> While his off-heel insidiously aside,
> Provokes the caper which he seems to chide."

The equestrian achievements of O'Malley would lead one to suppose that Lever was a master of the art. He was addicted to habits, however, which Rarey or "Nimrod" would hardly approve.*

"In horseflesh he was fastidious," says Major L——h. "He would have nothing to say to any horse on which there was a hair turned. I have seen him pay down £200 for a nag. When riding, he always wore an expression of the most thorough enjoyment. We used to say that there never was a man could show so large a front of shirt, white as snow and stiff as buckram. It seemed to me that one button, the lowest in his vest, was always enough for him. When I knew him at Templeogue, he lived at the rate of £3,000 a year."

The menagerie dinners were gradually relinquished by Lever. He found, as he said, that too many monkeys had crept into them. When Mr. Pearce arrived in 1844, to remain at Templeogue as Lever's amanuensis, he found him living extremely quietly, and mostly enjoying rides through sequestered portions of the Dublin mountains. He often laughed at the idea which pervaded the public mind as to the extent of his "orgies at Templeogue;" and he certainly had no objection that the delusion should continue. Whist parties with a

* "For example he galloped his horse on the hardest roads," Dr. Stoker says, and Major D—— declares that "though one of the boldest riders he had ever known even to leaping over a cart, he had a loose rolling seat." His style of riding was, in fact, like his style of writing, as described by "The Thunderer." "Your blood is on fire and your pulse on the gallop from the first page to the last."

chosen few were no doubt occasionally held, and one night that a member of his household was about to retire to rest, Lever whispered, "Don't go—I'm winning; the luck may turn if you withdraw." That night Lever retrieved some previous losses, winning not less than £200.

The period during which he edited the Magazine of his choice was coincident with the earlier years of Sir Robert Peel's second administration; and it cannot be doubted that to it he rendered good service in Ireland, notwithstanding that, as he himself declared, the machine (or Magazine) was drawn by "as groggy as set of screws as ever man held in harness." But even triumphal cars are often borne along by effectively draped animals of this character, nor has it ever been deemed indispensable that they should possess high stepping action. Able thinkers, no doubt, there were, who occasionally threw into the Magazine striking papers—men of the Butt, Griffin, Petrie, and Hayman mould. Lever's general description applied to the men-of-all-work attached to the serial throughout successive *régimes*, and who afterwards proved an *incubus* rather than a stimulus to its circulation.

1843—characterised by O'Connell as the Repeal year—was one pregnant with events and throes. At Mallow O'Connell hurled his defiance at the Government. In a letter written ere the prosecution of "the Liberator" was bruited, Lever tells one of his staff to "cut boldly and fear not." Party-spirit ran high, and as editor of a

leading Conservative organ, he was obliged to dip his pen in it.

Rarely had the Thunderer roared louder. In attacking Repeal, Ireland and the Irish were assailed. Lever found his position an irksome one. He was now reading up material for "The Knight of Gwynne;" and was struck by the difference of tone towards Ireland which marked the English press during the Union struggle, and at a later period. "Between the educated men of both countries," he writes, "there was scarcely a jealousy then. The character which political contest assumed later on, changed much of this spirit and dyed nationalities with an amount of virulence which, with all its faults and all its shortcomings, we do not find in the times of the 'Knight of Gwynne.'"

History teaches and experience shows that the men who write well do not always talk well. Virgil and Socrates were as mute owls. "My conversation," says Dryden, "is slow and dull." Addison was tongue-tied. Goldsmith was absent, silent, and blundering. Cobbett spoke badly. Washington Irving sent an apology to a literary dinner, lest he should be asked to speak. Grattan wrote with difficulty, as Bushe reminds us; and would tear up half a dozen successive efforts to pen a simple resolution.

Lever was strong in both gifts. Speaking behind the mask of Lord Kilgobbin, he writes: "The man who devotes himself to be a success in conversation, glories more in his triumphs, and sets a greater value on his

gifts than any other I know of." "Assuredly," observes a friend, "Lever prided himself as much on the charms of conversation as fair lady ever did on her beauty, and he had all the qualities that make a good talker—a face whose every muscle was flexible, rippling with fun and reflecting every phase of sentiment; eyes the merriest, a voice sweet and musical, that changed with every expression of feeling." But while thus seeming the incarnation of merriment, he often suffered, within, the utmost misery. A great thinker, Archbishop Whately, once happily said, "Gay spirits are always spoken of as a sign of happiness, though every one knows to the contrary. A cockchafer is never so lively as when a pin is stuck through his tail; and a hot floor makes bruin dance." On this point more presently.

The selection of Templeogue as a residence was, as we have said, mainly due to McGlashan. Its rather inaccessible situation checked the influx of visitors, and gave Lever more time for work. But many a bitter pang smote him on finding, as he sometimes did, a well organised dinner spoiled by the absence of some specially invited guest, or the tardy arrival of a fop that made the dinner one hour late. Some of these disappointments he glanced at in a lucubratory retrospect asking, "Is not the man who arrives late the man who need not arrive at all? Has the creature who has destroyed the fish and ruined the *entrée*, one, even one quality to indemnify you for the damage? Take the late men and answer me. Have you ever met one of them able, by the charm of

his converse or the captivation of his manners, to obliterate the memory of the dreary forty-five minutes your friends sat in the condemned cell of the ante-room longing for the last pang to be over?" In conclusion he declared that his experiences were most unhappy in this respect, and, referring to past efforts as host, proclaimed that nothing short of a superhuman geniality can conquer the gloom of an empty place. Another feature of the case presented itself. "In the deference you show by waiting for the late-comer, or in your distress at the absence of him who comes not at all, your other guests fancy they detect some deep sense of obligation to the man, and infer that he is your patron or your protector, that he has lent you money, or dragged you out of some awkward scrape, and that you are bound to treat him with all respect and deference. I am certain that I have suffered from this pleasant imputation."

"Few men," said Macmillan, "were more smart and incisive in repartee, more epigrammatic in a sentiment, more brilliant in a narrative, or more witty before the best of all audiences—the audience round the dinner-table." This is all just, excepting the praise awarded to him for repartee. Judge L. tells us that he was not very happy in retorts. It was more as a narrator of the strange things he had seen, and the queer people he had known, that he made so pleasant an impression. Brussels was a favourite topic of his. This place—the gangway to the Rhine and to a certain extent a *refugium peccatorum*—introduced him to a crowd of odd characters, all of whom

he sketched inimitably. They usually drank a bad wine, which Lever termed rot-gut, but which they on returning to London innocently praised as "ro-goo!" He was the best conversationalist that the Judge ever knew. Beside him Whiteside was simply nowhere. He even surpassed Anthony Richard Blake, of whom Sir Walter Scott speaks in glowing terms. So few talk well who write well that one cannot wonder that Maginn, after expressing in *Fraser* the delight with which he read "O'Malley" should add "Bravo Lever! If you can only tell stories as well as you write them, you would beat—" and here one of his strong figures followed.

As a story-teller he but once met his match, and that was the result of previous conspiracy. It was his oral success which at first led him to try his hand on written composition. The *Edinburgh Review*, on Curran's life, remarked that in England eminent men never made any attempt to shine in conversation. Shiel's description of Brougham at the head of his table, bears out this statement. The Irish, however, are a talking, rather than a reading people; and hence the flood of *bons raconteurs* which they have sent forth. Some say that Lever's talk approached too much to monologue, but this objection may have sprung from the pique felt by rival talkers who were driven to listen. A criticism uttered under the pressure of that feeling, which made Macaulay style pauses in Sydney Smith's talk "brilliant flashes of silence," expresses what we mean. One who vainly strove to edge in a word writes, "Lever's attitude and

tone completely reminded me of his crest—a cock perched on a trumpet!"

A coming scene wherein Crampton figured, finds him baulked in a not ungentlemanly way. But it was sometimes Lever's lot to find his progress stopped by some cur barking or biting at his heels. In one of his books he describes "the great talker of a company unexpectedly confronted by some unknown, undistinguished competitor, who, with the pertinacity of an actual persecution, will follow him through all the devious windings of an evening's conversation, ever present to correct, contradict, amend, or refute. In vain the hunted martyr seeks out some new line of country or starts new game; his tormentor is ever close behind."

Lever talked not to monopolise, but, as one well acquainted with him states, "Simply in the abandonment of himself to the sense of enjoyment—the exercise of a faculty that he knew not how to control." It might be said of him as Archbishop Whately once said, in reply to some one who remarked that a brother prelate had a wonderful command of language, "No; but language has a wonderful command of him. The rival talkers, however, sometimes had their revenge." And he proceeds to give another version of the anecdote told by Major D——, descriptive of Remmy Sheehan's revenge in not allowing Lever, at table, to edge in a word.* The supplemental touches to D——'s story claim admission

* *Vide* his Recollections, appended to this volume.

here as graphically illustrative of a scene in which it was Lever's fate more than once to bear a part.

"Dinner with its slight skirmishing chit-chat was over; and as the bottle went round, the host opened fire upon the unsuspecting victim. Sir Philip in a voice ever soft, gentle, and low, that commanded attention, took up the subject which he illustrated with the play of his own delicate humour, and held his auditors spell-bound. When he paused, Lever was about to 'go in,' but he was at once 'bowled out' by the host, and so the two kept it up till near midnight, never suffering Lever to get an 'inning.' Sir Philip went away first, and as the burly host shook Lever by the hand, he said with the slyest humour, as a smile lurked round his mouth, 'What a delightful evening you both gave me. Sir Philip was in great force to-night, but then you drew him out so cleverly.'"*

The brilliant baronet—half Hercules, half Adonis as he was—was just the sort of man not to be *géné* by the prestige of Lever's name. Few possessed a more imposing presence or greater confidence.† In the eyes of the

* Lever sometimes yielded to pique by putting real people in his books. A whisper went that "Lorrequer" would yet impale "the General of the Lancers," as the Surgeon-General, Sir Philip Crampton, was called. Lever, we hope, was guiltless of the practical joke played upon him late one night, when a messenger came to say that a great personage had fallen from his horse in College Green—Crampton on arrival finding King William's statue blown by gunpowder from his charger.

† Dr. S——, the pupil of Crampton, tells us that so long as he was sitting, he carried all before him. Put Crampton on his legs, as a lecturer or illustrator, and at once he became painfully powerless. He adds:—"Sir Philip liked Lever chiefly, I think, because he was a good dresser. The same reason led this brilliant man to maintain a cordial intimacy with Surgeon R——, who, unlike Lever, was the dullest of companions."

faculty he held a rank equal to that of Sir Astley Cooper; while Lever, as a junior surgeon patronised by Crampton in early struggles, must have felt a wee bit small beside him. From that day forth he could not say with the Duchess de Maine, "I am very fond of company; for I listen to no one, and every one listens to me."

As he grew older and wiser, he daily showed more tact in talk. He lost that desire to dominate which, it must be confessed, he seemed to hold when in the plenitude of his oral power. "Like an expert cricketer," said Wilde, as he gave us his impressions of him, "he always watched for the right moment to strike the ball, and, with practised decision, place it amid bursts of applause beyond the reach of his competitors." The moral which Lever himself drew from his earlier experience as a conversationalist is to be found in "O'Dowd."

"Not a monologist like Macaulay, nor an overbearing opinionist like Croker, nor a flippant epigrammatist like Thiers, my skill was pre-eminently employed in eliciting whatever latent stories of agreeability I could detect around me. Not merely a talker myself, I made talkers of others. No rock so dull that I could not elicit a spark from it; no table-land so barren that I could not find a wild-flower in its desolation."

With another irrepressible talker, Archbishop Whately, Lever had been acquainted from an early period. At Brussels he often joined Lever's receptions; but from the time of his removal to Ireland a more reticent intercourse and mien were maintained, notwithstanding that

Lever noticed him favourably in the first number of the magazine published under his management. Lever soon after had invited him to dinner, and as horticulture was one of the Archbishop's hobbies, the host took great pains to make his dinner party of such material as might best consort with his great guest's humour. What, however, was his discomfiture to find that his Grace's chaplain arrived to make the Archbishop's apologies, and convey his sincere regret at some untoward impediment to the promised pleasure! He brought with him, however, an enormous pumpkin grown in the episcopal hothouse; and this, with an air of well-assumed admiration, the host directed should be placed in the chair which his Grace ought to have occupied, directing to the comely vegetable much of his talk during the dinner; and when the time of coffee came, saying as they arose, "In all my experience of his Grace, I never knew him so agreeable as to-day."*

* Canon Hayman asks us :—"Why did Dr. Whately turn against Lever, after the author's arrival in Dublin? My impression is that it was not personal, but an editorial, dislike. Whately was a good hater. If he was a true friend, and no truer breathed, he was a bitter foe. Now the 'D. U. M.' had incurred the Archbishop's pique, not only for a decided divergence in politics from him, but particularly for an article (vol. v., pp. 528—544) called 'Historic Doubts relative to the Archbishop of Dublin.' I have always understood that this paper was the joint-stock contribution of several—the two O'Sullivans (Samuel and Mortimer), Butt, and others. It was taking up the Archbishop's line of argument in relation to Napoleon Bonaparte, in which, on sceptical grounds, he demonstrated that Napoleon never existed, and thus confuted infidels by the use of history. One must read the article itself to understand it. Suffice it, that dwelling on what the writers of it deemed the Archbishop's inconsistencies, they logically demonstrated his non-existence. I have been informed that Dr. Whately suffered acutely by perusing this paper, as though an opening in his armour

A coolness existed, but intercourse did not stop. Dr. Whately in dealing blows around, did not exempt Lever. The latter had generally honeyed words, but he could sometimes drop a sting. The Archbishop was notoriously susceptible to flattery. One day his Grace received a number of guests, including a large proportion of the expectant clergy, who paid profound court to the mighty Metropolitan. While walking through adjacent grounds Dr. Whately plucked a fungus from the trunk of a tree, declaring that such things were really nutritious; that in some countries the inhabitants ate them with gusto, and that prejudice alone deterred the Irish peasantry from doing the same. The Archbishop with his long clasp-knife cut a slice, requesting one of the clergy to taste it. He obeyed, and then, with a wry face, is said to have subscribed to the botanical orthodoxy of his master. "Taste it," said the gratified prelate, handing another slice to Lever. "Thank your Grace," he said, declining it; "my brother is not in your diocese."

Lever, sore and susceptible, received the scorch of Dr. Whately's caustic wit, but the details of the operation have not been preserved. "He was very thin skinned," writes his friend Major D——, "and never forgot some snub he received from the Archbishop, who was asked to meet Lever at dinner in Dublin. Lever harped upon the Dean of Drumcondra for ever."

had been hit; and that he nourished his wrath against the magazine for evermore. What more natural than his dislike to the jaunty novelist, who came to Dublin to assume the editorial reins."

This dignitary figures prominently in "Roland Cashel," especially in chapter the twelfth, descriptive of Mrs. Kennyfeck's dinner party; where he is represented as demonstrating how to lasso a Swiss bull by holding up his napkin over the head of the hostess, to the injury of her turban and bird of paradise plume. "When you represent a bull, ma'am, you should not have feathers," the dean is made to exclaim with a rough endeavour to restore the broken plume. "Had you held your head lower down, in the attitude of a bull's attack, I should have lassoed you at once and without difficulty."

It was whispered at the time that the caricatured face of Dr. Singer, afterwards Bishop of Meath, peeped from this book; but there is no proof for the statement. Lever himself told McGlashan: "I had only one portrait; the rest are mere fancy sketches. If my dean is like, I confess I intended it." These clerical caricatures are believed by Lever's friends to have operated against the promotion of his brother, a man of rare mark, whose sweetness was wasted on the desert air of Ardnurchur.

The Archiepiscopal crosier had smitten the Irish wit; and Lever to the end preserved his rod in pickle. He had arrangements made, shortly before his death, for the introduction, in full proportion and well studied detail, of Archbishop Whately, in a new book. Mr. Clibborne, Curator of the Royal Irish Academy, received a call from Lever on his last visit to Dublin, when he was asked, on the strength of an old school friendship, to collect Whatelyana for the crucible at Trieste.

A near relative of Lever's tells us that there was a side to his character which the world never saw—the more powerful his social displays the greater the depression which followed them. These reactions would begin ere the guests he invited had fully completed their adieux. The half hour which preludes departure from a dinner party was not without its pains, as one by one the guests bowed, slided, half pressed his fingers, and vanished. He persuaded himself that some few who lingered, and affected to seem at ease, were inwardly cursing their coachmen for delay. He confessed that the same doubts which often tormented himself at such moments, recurred whenever he had brought a serial story to an end—whether the entertainment he had provided had pleased his guests—and whether the introductions proved quite satisfactory; and he adds that the same sense of solitude which affects the host in his banquet hall when the guests had left, settles down upon the weary writer who watches the spirits he had conjured up suddenly vanish. In his rôle both of host and author, the same sad doubts would come, how much better he could do his part were the same ground to be retraced—what opportunities for amusing or interesting his friends had now gone for ever!

The best cure for such stings was to divert the mind from its brooding by plans of new stories. These passed rapidly through Lever's head; one greatly interested and amused his family. The Rev. Samuel Hayman, that able critic and genial friend, was begged to come from Cork

and hear what he styled a rehearsal of it at Templeogue. He had been invited in the spring, the summer, and the autumn, but something occurred to prevent him, and now that rugged winter had come with a drop at his nose, Lever asked the good curé why he would not venture forth and take his place by the fire? Life was a short thing; the best of it was the little uncostly interludes of social and affectionate intercourse which without altering the great current of men's fortunes, throw flowers on the stream. Therefore Hayman should come. Their gossipings had had a long arrear; and he was urged not to let the debt accumulate so heavily as to make payment a matter of terror.

CHAPTER III.

Recollections of Lever by his Amanuensis, Mr. Stephen Pearce—"St. Patrick's Eve"—"The O'Donoghue"—He again threatens to tear up the roots which his life had sown in the soil of Ireland.

It was about this time that Mr. Stephen Pearce, now a distinguished portrait painter in London, acted as amanuensis for Lever, just as George Huntly Gordon did for Scott; and following the example of Mr. Gordon, who communicated to Mr. Lockhart what he knew, Mr. Pearce has furnished us with some recollections of his Chief. These extend from October, 1844, to September, 1846, and also embrace some reminiscences of the years 1848—9.

"In the autumn of 1844 I went to Ireland, and stopped with some friends of the Right Hon. J. W. Croker, to whom he had given me a letter of introduction, and for whom I had just previously in England copied the portrait of Miss Croker, by Sir Thomas Lawrence. To my surprise, I found that their grounds adjoined those of Charles Lever, and being one of his most enthusiastic admirers, Mrs. Ellis soon introduced me at Templeogue House. A mutual regard and affection at once sprang up between Lever and myself, and a long visit only augmented this friendship. I there painted his portrait,

given afterwards to his brother; I also painted a picture of his study, with its ancient oak, with a back view of Lever himself sitting over the fire; also another small picture of the quaint old Dutch waterfall in front of the house, falling over a series of wide steps, with some fine old elm trees, the remains in years past of an ambitious avenue. Templeogue House, at the time I speak of, belonged to the Domville family, and had, I think long previously, been the residence of Lord Santry: in size, no doubt, it had been considerably reduced, but its walls of great thickness, the ghost room within, and faint remains of old terraced walks without, still attested its former importance and the startling stories of Irish life Lever used to speak of.*

"Lever at this time was about thirty-five years of age, most powerful in form, and full of energy in anything he really took up. On fine afternoons, we often rode at a rattling pace to his publisher's in Sackville Street, Dublin—some five English miles. [A party of boys were usually to be found awaiting us on Portobello Bridge, popularly known as 'Lever's Pack.' These

* Lever was under the impression, and often interested his guests by expressing it, that Templeogue House had been the scene of a horrible cruelty, said to have been performed by Lord Santry to O'Loughlin Murphy, but reference to the report of the trial fails to confirm this idea. This peer has been frequently accused, even in print, of having compelled a man to swallow whiskey till his mouth filled to overflow, and to have then applied a lighted match with fatal effect. He was certainly tried for his murder but Lord Santry's cousin, Mr. Domville, who supplied Dublin with water from the Dodder, at Templeogue, having threatened to cut it off unless the noble convict's life were spared, the Viceroy yielded to the pressure.

followed us, sometimes yelping like hounds, and arrived at much the same time as ourselves before the door of Curry the publisher in Sackville Street, where a good-humoured struggle took place amongst them, to see whose lucky lot it was to hold Lever's horse. These boys he always paid so liberally, that the Rev. John Lever, whose tastes were economic rather than extravagant, remonstrated privately with Charles on the point.]*

"If the weather happened to be wet or doubtful, we did not generally venture to Dublin at all, but invariably rode with the three children, Julia, Charley and Pussy in the large fields at the rear of the house, 'Where many a garden flower grew wild.' Here I remember some old trees had fallen, and it was Lever's great delight for us to gallop round in line, and jump the trees—he generally giving a wild "hurroo" as we all five took the jump together.

"Sometimes we made the circuit of several of these fields, and it was on one of these occasions that Lever had a very smart hand-to-hand fight with a thick-set powerful countryman. We had noticed two men prowling about in the distance, and at last one jumped a ditch, and scrambled over a gap into the field in which we were riding. Lever ordered him out of it, and meeting with an impudent reply, he pressed a hot-tempered chestnut mare he was riding with his heels, and her shoulder caused the intruder to go with considerable impetus towards the gap. In a great rage, the man

* The supplemental passages in brackets were told to us *vivâ voce* by Mr. Pearce, and are introduced with his leave.

seized a huge stone with both his hands, and hurled it towards the spot where Lever rode. It passed over the children—just missing one of their heads. Rapid as lightning, Lever was off his horse, and seizing the trespasser behind by the collar of his coat, he sent him flying on to the top of the gap, where overbalancing, he tumbled into the ditch. Lever was very muscular, and he awaited without fear the inevitable retaliation. The man regained his feet and the bank, more furious than ever! and a regular pugilistic fight ensued, in which Lever received two or three severe blows, and the man got most severely handled, if one could judge by his appearance. Lever then jumped into the saddle, the children were left at home, and off we rode to the nearest police station, 'just to have first talk' as Lever said, in case the man should also make an appearance there. We never, however, heard another word about it.

"The sudden transition from the hard work I had been going daily through in London at the early morning lectures of Professor Partridge at King's College—my close application at the Life Schools of The Royal Academy, and long night toil at Albinus and other anatomical work, to the joyous life at Templeogue, and the delightful companionship of Lever, whom, as the brilliant author of 'Harry Lorrequer' 'Charles O'Malley,' &c., I looked upon with all the hero-worship of which I was then so brimful—all these things united, flung a halo of poetry and romance over everything connected with him, and my long visit ended in my becoming his secretary or amanuensis.

"At this time 'The O'Donoghue' was being written—its first numbers having just appeared. Lever was somewhat uncertain in regular application, often not being up to the mark sufficiently to please himself, and I have known him to be so dissatisfied with his morning's or evening's writing, or dictation, that he has destroyed it. At other times, on the contrary, his flashing and brilliant thoughts have carried him on and on for a great length of time, pacing up and down the room quite in excitement, while his delivery of words has been so rapid that it was impossible to keep pace with them without my writing being nearly all abbreviations, which I afterwards copied out clear for the press.

["But he never allowed the too slow absorption on paper of his thick-coming fancies rapidly dictated to elicit an exclamation of impatience. He was always genial, gentle and good-humoured;* and at times as playful as a

* All sorts of things were written down from dictation, including squibs for "Punch." A remarkable Rebel Poem, "The Memory of the Dead," written at this time, the paternity of which, though known, was never acknowledged by its author, led Lever to improvise some opposition stanzas beginning :—

"'Who fears to speak of ninety-eight?'
You ask in forty-four:
Methinks the question put so late
Had better been before;
When crime and guilt, and blood fresh spilt
Were rife on every hand,
When true men like you men
Ran riot through the land."

Wilde said that the authorship of the original reminded him of the boy who chalked up "No Popery" and then ran away.

child. At Carlsruhe he once sent me a valentine, drawn, I afterwards found, by himself; and on another occasion an invitation ostensibly from the Rev. Mr. Dwyer, to dine with him. My acceptance brought an *éclaircissement* from the churchman, who said he would be glad to see me, but not to expect company under the circumstances.]

"I have been asked if he attended church.

"Poor dear Lever with his real genius, his great feeling, his strong impulses, his powerful frame, and his robust health, all these found vent in his writings and his brilliant conversation, his affection, his gushes of romance, love, and gambling, his fast riding, &c.

"It was all dash and go—up to the highest pitch it was possible, with, I think, not much thought of the future; though in purity of morals he was certainly *sans reproche.* We know how 'broken spirits' came in his latter years, when failing powers no doubt made themselves felt—when his only boy, his brother, his wife, and so many friends and light-hearted acquaintances had gone never to return; who knows but that 'broken spirits' were the preparation for the highest and the most solemn thoughts and resolves as he neared and passed from life to death and to eternity.*

"Lever's descriptions of Irish life and conviviality

* "Poor Lever!" writes Canon Hayman, "none sooner than he himself would admit his foibles and failings. Let us hope and believe, with his kind amanuensis, that sorrow brought him higher and better things; and I myself possess knowledge, hidden from Pearce, that under that wild levity, sober and sacred thoughts were not unfrequently concealed—I must not say buried."

would lead a stranger to conclude that the same kind of living was indulged in at his own residence. Certainly his hospitality, and his manner of making his house and everything in it seem as if it were your own, could not be exceeded; but his long residence in Brussels had made him quite foreign in his dinners and his wines, and I do not remember ever seeing whiskey, much as he has written about it in his books. With him it was quality, not quantity; and to such an extent did he carry this epicurean fancy, that later on at Carlsruhe and at Reidenburg he had a first rate-man cook, part of whose business it was daily to place by the side of his plate at breakfast (always a light meal with him) the *menu* for the evening dinner, in order that Lever might alter perhaps some *plat* or other more to his taste. He was a *gourmet*, not a *gourmand*.

["At two o'clock he joined the children at dinner, and made it his lunch. Contrary to the stereotyped opinions and advice of some great physicians, he usually slept for an hour after dinner: following the natural example of that wisest of animals, the dog. He also differed with the most progressive of the faculty by a constant administration of physic to his family, to himself, and to me. Calomel and colocynth were favourite 'household drugs' with him. When his after-dinner sleep had terminated, he started up quite brisk, full of wit, wisdom, and work. Supper he never took, unless when friends were with him.]

"What the world calls 'Society' he quite disliked,

and it was abused and avoided in every possible way. He disliked to encounter the mob of starers, or impertinent questioners. Though full of geniality in general, few knew better how to keep troublesome persons at a distance. So our life at Templeogue could not have been more peaceful and quiet, although all kinds of stories of the wildest character prevailed. Occasionally a dinner-party was got up to welcome some well-known visitor to Ireland, and then Lever gathered around him his friends Mortimer O'Sullivan, Macdowell and Longfield of Trinity, the Rev. Dr. Griffin, afterwards Bishop of Limerick, and others, whose brilliant talents and wit blazed forth with a power unknown to my ears either before or since. On these evenings, after the majority had left for Dublin, whist commenced, and it was generally day-break before the few chosen ones were driven away on their Irish cars.

"One guest, whose name I have not mentioned, after playing whist with Lever until the small hours, had to make some public examination at the University; and had barely time, on arrival at Trinity, to slip on his gown, and hasten into the Hall, where, seating himself, tired and sleepy, in his arm-chair, he exclaimed in the midst of a perfect silence, 'Now then, Play!'

"During these Templeogue days, I well remember the following story of Lever's, and I only wish I could recall the very many of all kinds he was always overflowing with.

"When the 11th Hussars arrived in Dublin, their

notoriety made them a great attraction, owing to the Earl of Cardigan being their Colonel, and the numerous duels and quarrels that had occurred in the regiment. After a levée at the Castle, one of their officers was walking along Sackville Street on a sunny afternoon in his full dress, and he was met by two Irishmen fresh from the country. Quite staggered at the glittering and gorgeous apparition clanking towards them, they riveted their eyes on the blazing gold, blue, and crimson figure, and with a wondering gaze, the one exclaimed to the other, with a sharp nudge in the ribs and a look of exquisite fun, 'Begorra, shouldn't I like to pawn him!'

"Three months or more of constant and daily companionship with Lever, his wife and his children, had made me feel almost like a younger brother towards him —our interests and our pleasures seemed the same— so much so indeed, that finding that the children were without any regular routine of education, I persuaded Lever to let me become their tutor."

"Lever was sometimes very indolently inclined. I always had his interests most sincerely at heart; often and often I used to try and tempt him to dictate, sometimes I succeeded, and at other times he would vote it a bore, and say that he did not feel up to it, &c.

"He was also very often negligent and careless about correcting his proofs. To make him attend to them I used to read them to him sometimes, in order that he might alter words or sentences. The truth was, he wrote or dictated with his brain overflowing with talent and

go, but he would rather be put to break stones than correct.

"It was just the same about his first dealings with Chapman and Hall. He wanted a fresh publisher, especially as at that time things were not so comfortable with his Dublin Magazine. I felt that Chapman and Hall were the men above all others; but no, he could not be got to London and go in for it. Keenly alive to his interests, I persuaded him to let me go, and with 'St. Patrick's Eve' in my trunk, I crossed in a tremendous storm, called at Chapman and Hall's, and in the little room at the back of their wareroom I read the best part of 'St. Patrick's Eve' to the two partners; settled the agreement there and then, and I think at the same time concluded the agreement for his next serial work, 'The Knight of Gwynne.'"

The little story, "St. Patrick's Eve," was founded on his experiences of the great misery and sufferings of the Irish peasantry during the rage of cholera, and though not avowed, was in fact suggested by "Dickens's Chimes," which had just had a great success. The high moral tone and aim of "St. Patrick's Eve" may be seen from a dedication to his children omitted in later Editions:

"There are few things less likely than that it will ever be your lot to exercise any of the rights or privileges of landed property. It may chance, however, that even in your humble sphere, there may be those who look up to you for support, and be in some wise dependent on your will; if so, pray let this little story have its lesson in your

hearts. Think that, when I wrote it, I desired to inculcate the truth that prosperity has as many duties as adversity has sorrows; that those to whom Providence has accorded many blessings are but the stewards of His bounty to the poor, and that the neglect of an obligation so sacred as this charity is a grievous wrong, and may be the origin of evils for which all your efforts to do good through life will be but a poor atonement."

The scenes described were, however, so painful, and the whole tone of the book so very different from that of the works by which his previous reputation had been made, that "St. Patrick's Eve" rather disappointed his old admirers. "The public," observes Major D——, "rarely suffers an author to change abruptly his style and manner, with the same indulgence that it extends to political leaders and statesmen, who often have been valued in proportion to the suddenness with which they modified their principles and views." But thinkers there were who approved the change, and admitted that "St. Patrick's Eve" showed strength of wing for higher flights. Amongst these was John Lever, who, handing it to Mrs. Lodge, when a guest at his vicarage, said, "This book has made my children both laugh and cry." "The tale is touched throughout with genuine pathos," observes another kind critic, "and exhibits glimpses of beauty, moral and intellectual, gleaming over the rugged lot of the Irish labourer, like the pure specks of blue in a stormy sky, when occasionally the clouds sever."

Lever asked his amanuensis to call on Chapman and

Hall, "to visit, explore, and sound, first of all about the 'Saint,' to see if they were satisfied in all respects with the sale, to learn what they ultimately looked for, as to its extent, and to feel his way if they inclined to buy 'St. Patrick' body and soul, for 'Lorrequer' was a *poor* sinner just then."

They liked the book. It was the first which they published for Lever. For 5,000 copies, he received £200.

"St. Patrick's Eve" revealed, rather more than "The O'Donoghue," that our author's early political bias was on the wane. He tells McGlashan that it was not meant for either party, and that he was as sick of the ignorant stupidity of the high Tory, as he was disgusted with the sordid conduct of the Repealer. He challenged his critics to hit as hard as they liked, that he would never flinch the combat, and that whenever he believed he had truth with him, he would spare neither one side nor the other.

He was urged to change the title, but refused; the Saint had been uppermost over the sinner in his mind when writing it: "St. Patrick" must therefore stand. It was not an attack on landlords, as a critic supposed, but an appeal to their good feeling, which they could only convert into an attack by convicting themselves. "I wrote what I believed to be the truth in 'St. Patrick' —not the whole truth, because my space did not permit, and also because I would not really lay on the lash when the back was already raw, but, if I should live and am

able to work out my intention, I will recur to the topic, and certainly not spare the owners of property who prefer factitious political influence to a position of credit and honour, and self-indulgence to the high duties of their station."

This year found him hard at work on his "Nuts," his "Trains," his Magazine, his "O'Donoghue"—with a hundred other small irons in the fire with which, as he remarked to Hayman, he had been burning his fingers. These he cooled in the bracing breezes of the Dublin mountains, or in culling the wild flowers of Templeogue as they sparkled with dew.

The roses alone rise to Mr. Pearce's memory. Of the thistles and thorns he knew nothing. By frequent stings Lever was well nigh goaded into "cutting the cable." With Mr. Curry, the head of the publishing firm in Dublin, he had some unpleasant differences, and declared that he cared nothing for life if he were to spend it watching points like an Old Bailey attorney. These disagreements were adjusted in the end, but not until Lever had menacingly resigned. In asking Hayman to brace up his loins for a new number of the Magazine, he mentioned that, "just as England never knew that for twenty-four hours she had no ministry, so the staff might have been in ignorance that for the same space of time they had no editor. Partial control with full responsibility—all the kicks and no half-pence—became, even to the smooth down of my unruffled disposition, too much, and so—I made my bow to Curry and Co.,

and said good morning. They however took fright, and took counsel, and ended by offering me such a definite and unmistakable control as I had stipulated for originally, and it now remains to be seen whether they will act as they promised—otherwise *Je m'en vais, ou m'en va* —for Picnot said on his death-bed, 'Remember, gentlemen, they are both good grammar!'"

Among other editorial worries he complained of an article on Mr. C——, a contemporary Irish novelist, which had just been inserted. He saw no necessity for many of the allusions to other writers, nor any disparagement of good and worthy men, to extenuate the faults of one he believed very much the reverse. His genius was less questionable ground, and might have satisfied any admirer. "I remember an old apothecary in Derry, whose greatest confidence in materia medica lay in asafœtida, and he went so far as to regard it as a perfume, and really the notice of C—— reminds me of him." Some of the newspapers had been good enough to attribute the paper to Lever, a compliment for which he felt by no means grateful.

The "O'Donoghue," which had long been appearing in monthly parts, was not brought to a close till late this year. Touching its catastrophe he wrote to McGlashan that he feared it would not content his Tory friends, who seemed to think that Mark should grace a gallows, and all the agencies of rebellion be victimized.

Of Lever it might be said, as Ampère remarked in speaking of Ozanam, that "the largeness of his concep-

tion taught him to recognise sympathies outside the camp in which he fought." Lever found himself in the end belonging not decidedly to either one party or the other, but gazing from his observatory at Templeogue with thorough philosophy upon both.

"I care not a fig
For Tory or Whig,
But sit in a bowl and kick round me,"

is the motto inscribed on the titlepage of "O'Dowd"—a series of jottings mainly autobiographic.

His final year in Dublin was passed, not in the easy chair of an editorial autocrat, but on what he called "the high stool of repentance," or rather between two very irksome stools. The *Nation* assailed him from one side, the *Mail* and *Warder* from the other.

His gaze, from what he called his observatory, was not confined to social or political life. He read character in books, and amused himself a good deal in reviewing.*

* A paper on Walpole's "Memoirs of the Reign of George the Third" appears in the "D. U. M." for February, 1845. He regarded the early years of this reign as the cradle of our existing institutions, and the origin of those two great camps of party which for more than a century have divided between them the government of this country. Another review—one of Thiers's "Consulate and the Empire" (April 1845) favourably contrasts with his tone towards Thiers in later letters. Lever's Gallic sympathies are apparent in this paper. He condemns the tone of Scott's "Life of Napoleon," in which he says "imputations are laid and motives attributed, which neither facts warrant nor inferences enforce, and that a party bias pervades the writer, who is never satisfied save when tracing a hatred to England, and a Gallican perfidy in every act or word of the Consul or the Emperor" (*vide* "D. U. M.," v. xxv., p. 492). "Constantinople," by Charles White, was reviewed by Lever ("D. U. M.," v. xxv., p. 331). Lever, who had always had a passion for rambling, began by saying that the East had become to us what France and Germany were to our grandfathers, and

Rest followed; and Hayman was told that he did nothing but crack some trashy "Nuts" as a compromise for blue pill, for bile must be bullied. He was out of sorts, felt dissatisfied with the treatment he had received from his publishers, and said that if Curry and Co. did not definitely close that day, he would lie down on his pillow *un roi abdiqué*, and that Hayman might prepare to receive *les adieux au Fontainebleau*, and to swear allegiance to the new editorial Bourbon, but that, unlike Napoleon, he would never absolve him from his love and affection. The day of abdication was staved off by a well-timed submission to Lever's views.

Once more he found himself chained to the oar; and with an eye firmly fixed on the future. Braced for a fresh start, he asked Hayman for muscular help. He did not like the boat with *his* bench unoccupied.* Of the magazine his final experience was, that it only hampered and worried, while it benefited him neither in fame nor in pocket. He was still acting editor. In sending a hard book to Hayman for review, he said, that if the task "bored him, to pitch it—not to the d——, but back again

that we should soon hear of little tea-parties of elderly spinsters on the wall of China; while Gregory Greendrake would doubtless desert lake and tarn to visit Behring's Straits, imitating the giant in story,

> "Who baited his hook with a dragon's tail,
> Sat down on a rock and bobbed for a whale."

* Hayman's Papers he never looked at, whether in copy or in the proof slips, not wishing to mar the pleasure in store for him. Literature in *papillotes* was, he said, a sad destroyer of one's admiration for the muse *en grande toilette*.

to that other unfortunate devil, Charles Lever, who would do his best to break his teeth on it."

The winter of 1844 found him more than ever anxious to "cut the cable." The debility and depression consequent on a sharp attack of influenza darkened his hopes.* Every alternate week he bought a guide-book or a map, and within the autumn had travelled over all Europe in spirit, and spent several winters in Dresden Florence, Rome and Vienna. He declared to Hayman that for the studied malignity his residence in Ireland provoked, he had been unprepared; but as there was only one thing worse than a wrong step—persistence in it—he should not remain longer in such troubled waters.

Again he recurred, with increased warmth and decision, to the same theme. "I am off to Brussels and the Rhine, to Dresden and to Vienna, heartily sick of drudgery, printers, publishers, and small literati, with little brains and much malice; and behold me at last, worn-out, impatient, and standing with my carpet bag ready for a start! When I shall return, if ever, I know not. My trip is partly for health, to end as God pleases. For myself I am satisfied to seek out a tranquil place in a foreign land, and work away among my children, and consent to be as thoroughly forgotten as I am now a prominent object for attack." He desired to have a word

* In the intervals of coughing and sneezing he tried to do some work, for which, as he said to Hayman, that beastly malady, a cold in the head, must be responsible for the stupidity. Mrs. Lever had alone escaped the compliments of the season, and was the only one of the family who could avoid substituting the letter L for N.

at parting with Hayman, the only friend his last three years had given him; a friend so sincerely esteemed, that he sorrowed not to have seen him again at Templeogue, and to have told him how dear he was to all around his fireside.

"Man proposes!" Next morning he awoke to find himself an utter cripple by gout: which left him unable to do aught, as he said, but mope and despond. A short missive to Mr. Curry asked for some money due to him, as the bores of the year, "the Compliments of the Season," came dunning so sure as he felt out of sorts. This gentleman's death, which took place soon after, arose from injuries sustained on board the Holyhead boat when, during a lurch of the ship, he was precipitated from his berth to the floor of the cabin.

Bile and dyspepsia were not yet uprooted from Lever's system, and we may, perhaps, trace to their presence some share of the tone which tinges his unreserved utterances. Not long before he speaks of vile headaches not leaving him night or day after three months' endurance, a goad which the most serene of natures might vainly try to withstand. From within and without stings came—Tory and Radical organs attacked and worried him. His exit was stimulated by the stings which, as from a nest of hornets, followed him. He was piqued against Ireland, and lost temper in alluding to the period of his editorial connection with that country. The sharpest sting, however, had come from England, as Mr. Hall's letter shows.

Ten weeks later he reverted to the subject, and expressed to Hayman the comfort it was that one could say freely to him what, with a mere acquaintance, must be paragraphed into style or not said at all. "Weary and worn out by complicated annoyances from every quarter, sick of falsehood, pretension, bad faith, covert insolence, and senile flattery, I have preferred, even at the sacrifice of what to a poor man is something—money—to go abroad, and live away from such questionable pleasures, and at least enjoy quiet and tranquillity out of the reach of ruffian roar and sentimental scoundrelism." He was not too proud to tell Hayman, that he had come back to Ireland, three years previous, with very confident expectations that his return would meet a welcome—that men, for want of better, were willing to accept even such small talent as his in the cause of country; and that having happily made friends when among strangers, he should not be less fortunate when at home. "*Mauvais calcul!* Envy from some, jealousy from others, insult from many, misrepresentation and calumny from all, were the incense that met me; the press on both sides agreed on one point, to attack and vilify me. I lived it down, lived down the clamour and the slander, walked over the insolence, rejected the flattery, declined the society, and now, having done more than enough even for wounded self-love—*je m'en vais*—I leave them poorer, it is true, than I came, but still wiser." As he unbosomed himself to Hayman, after ten weeks' absence, on a calm summer's day, with a gentle breeze

swinging the window-blind and no other interruption save the happy laugh of his children as they played on the floor, he could not be suspected, he said, of any very excited feelings on this subject. The good parson, he trusted, would acquit him of any undue craving of popularity or notoriety. He had had his share of the one, more than enough of the other; so that in these, his confessions, he was not unburthening himself of mere injured vanity, but deliberately stating what he had experienced, and what he had consequently done.

O'Sullivan was informed that for some time longer he would retain his shadow of connection with the magazine, and therefore asked him not to speak loud among friends of his changed course. He wished to avoid any canvassing of his acts and motives, simply because falsehood would play a more conspicuous part therein than truth. For the rest, let them bite on! In his seclusion he would hear nought of the calumnies, and he thought he might be trusted as regards personal intercourse with all west of the Welsh mountains. "Warburton, Hayman, and O'Sullivan," was the only shamrock whose triple verdure he acknowledged. Lever was out of temper with the Irish people; but he does not seem to have been in love with the English either. On December 20, 1846, he speaks of his Austrian neighbours, and felt disposed to thank God, that they had none English.

Lever was a man of strong impulse. Words are found in his correspondence expressive of bounding prejudices which fuller thought led him to modify. Twenty

years before his death he yearns again for Ireland as a residence. Alluding to two tempting proposals of office from America, he said (November 28, 1853,) that he was too old to take root in a new soil, and would rather go back to some snug nook in his own land. Strong personal feeling is found animating many of his political allusions at this time. Among the myriads who thronged forward under the banner of Repeal, were men who went much further than O'Connell would wish: and after Lever's withdrawal from Ireland, a complete schism split the national ranks. The young Ireland press had persistently attacked Lever and with much point, while he remained in Ireland. These attacks hurt his sensitive nature deeply, and sometimes left him, as he says, biting his pen for hours. Lever's mistake was in confounding O'Connell and the Catholics with those seditiously disposed. "High mass and high treason," he once bitterly exclaimed, "are the order of the day." The real advocates for physical force, however, were not the priests, or the Catholics, but some influential Protestants who included, with others, Thomas Davis, Smith O'Brien, John Mitchell, and John Martin. The *Freeman* and the *Pilot*, the organs of O'Connell, were edited by Gray and Barrett, also Protestants, both "Repeal Martyrs of 1843." In the latter categories may also be classed Tom Steele, O'Connell's A. D. C. and "Head Pacificator."

The Repeal agitation was at its height when Lever made his tour of Ireland. He complained of it being a source of worry to even his calm and even-minded

nature: and however he might turn his eyes and ears from the scene of strife, the very necessity of that restraint was a cause of marked discomfort. The concluding words of the "Knight of Gwynne" let us into the secret of what he would have wished to see his country. "Let us hope that from the depth of our present sufferings better days are about to dawn, and a period approaching when old Ireland shall be 'great' in the happiness of her people, 'glorious' in the development of her inexhaustible resources, and 'free' by that best of freedom, free from the trammels of an unmeaning party warfare."

The elder Lever, when passing some time with his brother at Templeogue, had sought to dissuade him from leaving Ireland, fearing that his love of change and adventure should lead to Scylla when trying to avoid Charybdis. Charles, 'tis true, had disbursed freely in Ireland, and, on the whole, lost at play; but the continent presented a still wider field for expenditure in all that offered fascination to the buoyant novelist.

All sorts of stinging stories ran through Dublin, attributing to false causes Lever's flight. Twenty years after, he said in "O'Dowd": "Big cities, towns of any kind, are very unfavourable to swanlike geese. The people who live in these places are singularly wilful and cruel, and pluck the quill-feathers out of one's poor bird out of pure malevolence and a love of mischief."

Among those rumours was the statement, still implicitly believed by many, that "Lever was over head

and ears in debt, and found it wise to fly." Lever's "smash" was in everybody's mouth. No man knew him more intimately at this time than Judge Longfield, who informs us that "so far as he could ascertain, Lever, when leaving Ireland, did not owe a pound." Major D——, his life-long associate, confirms this account :—

"Lever never left debts unpaid that I ever heard of," he writes, "either in Dublin or elsewhere. He often lived beyond his means ; but he always paid his way : at first by selling his patrimony in houses in Dublin, subsequently by working double tides." *

In relinquishing the editorial pen, he said to McGlashan that he preferred perfect abdication to a subjective monarchy. But whenever he felt disposed to write, he agreed to accept £50 per sheet for original articles, and £10 for reviews.

Lever had taken public leave of Dublin and the Magazine in words utterly unlike his private utterances,

* Numerous little proofs might be cited to show his vigilance as regards small debts. Thus in 1853, he asked McGlashan to pay 6s. to a trader, and to say that Charles Lever didn't forget though his son did. The dark colours in which he always paints attorneys led us to inquire whether he, at any time, received ill usage at their hands. "I never heard of his having anything to do with attorneys," replies the Major, "except in a case where he had some trouble about the house at Templeogue which he rented from some one who did not pay his rent, and the head landlord came down on Lever. I am pretty sure he was never served with a writ or any document of that sort. But it is quite possible to have a well-founded dislike to attorneys without personal experience of that kind. Lever is not singular amongst authors in this dislike. Lord Byron speaks of Lambro the Pirate as a 'sea-attorney,' and Mr. Carlyle has many a hard hit at them." Templeogue House, after Lever's tenancy, passed into the hands of Knighting, the notorious railway official.

and tending to remind one of an apophthegm of Talleyrand's: "Mr. Puff," he writes, "expresses his dismay 'that there is no getting people off their knees;' such is precisely my difficulty at this moment. I am about to take leave of you; and most anxious to know how best and most suitably to express the sense I entertain of your favour, and my own unworthiness." He declined to state the reasons which led to this step, but declared that amongst them was no diminished interest in the Magazine, or any disagreement with its publishers.

He dearly loved change of scene and place. His sudden decision to leave Dublin must be interpreted more generously than some of his expressions seem to warrant. He could not continue to write if he did not meet with adventure; all his books are stored with the ripe fruit of personal observation. He said that the pawn on the chessboard has a most eventful life, simply because its progress is slow, methodical, and unchangeable; but not so the knight, who with the errantry of his race, dashes here and there, encountering every rank, always in difficulties himself, or the cause of them to others. "What the knight is to the chessboard, the adventure is to real life. The same wayward fortune and zig-zag course belongs to each, and each is sure to have a share in every great event that occurs about him." If Lever could not write without a store of past personal adventure to draw upon, neither could he live without partaking of its elixir. The seclusion of Templeogue, at first delightful, became at last dull and dreadfully monotonous.

McGlashan, in fact, chose it for Lever because of its somewhat inaccessible position to visitors. The publisher supposed that it would afford facilities for an inexhaustible flow of composition; but he latterly found that, owing to dearth of fuel, the machinery sometimes showed symptoms of stopping.*

"You rightly tell of his anxiety about critical notices," writes Canon Hayman, "which customarily either stimulated or saddened. He writhed under one criticism on the D. U. M., *i.e.*, that he had found it the 'Blackwood' of Ireland, and had made it the 'Bentley.' But in unsettling him there were more causes than reviews of his works. He did not take well to our manners. He abhorred our way of entertaining friends. Often he has said to me, 'Eating is the chief end of entertainments with our people. If I were with the French I should only light my rooms well, provide some coffee and light refreshments, and have charming evenings.' The expense he did not care for, but he missed the *spirituel*, and he sickened at the animal nature of our insular entertainments. Nor do I wonder. A sojourn on the continent opens a new world to us, who dwell in these isles. The skies, the rivers, the mountains, the plains,

* Inaccessible as Templeogue was, Lever complained to Hayman that from the number of queer people who called, they seemed to regard him as a sort of general agent for vagabonds at home and abroad. A young scribe asked for introductions to the continent, as he was going away for two months to learn German and French. "I hope you do not forget," replied Lever, "that Cervantes, Alfieri and Tasso, had languages of their own also. I took eight months to be able to read Jean Paul Richter, and I should at least take four more now to bring back the power to do so."

the people, so entwine themselves around the affection, that it is difficult to love our own old murky climate again. Lever became like others, cosmopolitan in his feelings; and could not tolerate our narrowness and angularities. I am far from saying that he was made happier or better by the change. There were seasons when he longed for the obscurity and usefulness of a dispensary doctor's life, and would say—"Non malè vixit, qui natus moriensque fefellit."

"When just on the wing," writes his cousin, Mr. Innes, "he made the remark, 'Dublin people say I am about to take French leave, my creditors having lost patience with me, and that my resemblance to Sir Jonah Barrington would be made perfect, by winding it up with a midnight flitting like his. The plain truth is I came to Dublin so poor a man, that I cannot be much poorer leaving it, but no one suffers by my poverty, but me, and mine.'"

An outburst of effulgent talent shone forth in Ireland between the years '43 and '50, which, it may not be too much to say, took fire from Lever's genius, though the torches thus enkindled led to different routes. During that interval blazed Lefanu, Davis, Mangan, Mitchel, Meagher, Speranza, Wilde, McCarthy, O'Hagan, Duffy, O'Callaghan, Darcy-MacGee, MacNevin, Dalton Williams, O'Gorman, Leyne, A. M. Sullivan, Hoey, Waller, Starkey, and M. J. Barry, whom Lever regularly took under his editorial wing. Latterly there has been somewhat of a pause in the bright pomp of this march of mind.

CHAPTER IV.

Off to the Continent—Lever as a Journalist—Excites a sensation at Carlsruhe—Loss at the Baden tables—Collapse of a projected Novel—Rents the Reider-Schloss—"The Knight of Gwynne"—Phiz—Como—Venice—Rome—His papers seized by the Austrian authorities.

Some cerebral stings had warned Lever that change of scene was needed. "What would poor Scott have given," writes Dickens, "to have gone abroad of his own free will, a young man, instead of creeping there, a driveller, in his miserable decay?"

"In the spring of 1845," continues his amanuensis, Mr. Stephen Pearce, "Lever determined to leave Ireland and go on the continent; and in May of that year we had all arrived at Brussels, where his old friend Sir Hamilton Seymour was still the English minister. After some considerable stay at Brussels, with parties at the Embassy, visits to the Picture Galleries, Lacken, and the Field of Waterloo, we most pleasantly travelled onwards through Belgium to the Rhine, and settled for a time at Bonn. I ought to mention that Lever took over his horses and carriages to the continent, and made use of them, not only for the purpose of travelling from place to place, but also for riding and driving in and about the residences where he located himself for a time.

"At Bonn we saw, I well remember, on a lovely summer's day, three student duels with the sword in a picturesque wood a few miles away—I having obtained private information from Alexis von Wolff, a young Russian friend, whose acquaintance I had made there. The royal consort of England was then a great lion, and Lever gathered with interest particulars of his career at Bonn, how he had lived in the most quiet, simple, and frugal way, and how his uncle, the late King of the Belgians, struck by his steadiness, selected him in his own mind as the future husband of our queen. From Bonn we went to Baden-Baden, where Lever was in a most excited state about gambling, and where he got hit hard. He then took a house at Carlsruhe, where his old friends G. P. R. James the novelist and Major D—— resided. The latter had been an old companion of his in Ireland many years previous, and had latterly been in the Hungarian Hussars of the Austrian service. We were for several evenings visited by the Marquis of Douro, who amused and interested us all very much with anecdotes of his father, the great Duke."

But Mr. Pearce anticipates.

Confidential whispers to O'Sullivan and others find Lever in the spring of 1845 wading through the last £50 he had in the world; but if his trip had made him poor, it had bettered his health: he had grown much thinner, and the headaches had disappeared.

To help in eking out a livelihood, he had not even the chance of medical fees to look to. The relinquished rod

of Esculapius was not so easily re-grasped. He avoided ordering physic, he said, as much as most men do taking it. Hayman is told (December, 1846) that he had a perfect abhorrence of all labour, but most of writing books—which was, after all, the sorriest mode a man of his taste or feeling could get his bread by. Nevertheless bread must be bought. Getting up steam for "The Trains by Tilbury Tramp" once more engaged him.

Though no longer editor, he continued to write occasionally for the serial in which his first literary attempts had appeared. On reading them in the Magazine, distance failed to lend enchantment to his view. In March, 1845, a missive to McGlashan invokes "the curse of Cromwell on the devils who included Danes vice Druses in his list of Oriental population." What seems to be a bit of stirring autobiography had a somewhat better fate. "His papers on 'the Burschenschaft of Germany,' published in the 'D. U. M.'" remarks Canon Hayman, "ought certainly to be consulted by readers desirous of tracing his progress at this time." *

Lever when in Dublin had started a newspaper as an organ of the Irish Government, which after internal

* Lever tells that he was hailed gleefully by old "Foxes" and friends; "Irländer, you have come back; right welcome! Champagne for the Irländer," resounded from every side. "There is no use in resisting," he writes, "no use in saying with a smile—which, Heaven forgive us! we have sometimes done, in order to save the pockets of our entertainers—that we prefer beer! The flasks are brought forth, the corks fly, the goblets foam, our health is drunk, we are on our legs." (D. U. M. vol. xxvii., p. 440.) Later on "a party of excited young 'foxes' came up, and seizing upon us, insisted on having a dance. It was in vain we struggled, and represented that in our country such a thing without the presence of the fair sex was impossible

struggles came to a speedy end. He lost money and heart by it; and from the chiefs of party whose cause it warmly espoused, received scant thanks. And worse still, it finally turned on Lever himself and fiercely stung him, while robbing him as well. This print was called the *Dublin Times*, but had no connection with the journal which now bears a similar title. Lever declared to McGlashan that his experiences of that print had taught him a new feature in journalism, namely, that insolence and robbery could be advantageously combined. It would soon be dead and d——d, and he didn't care if the printer were so with it. These mortifying experiences failed to wean him of editorial leanings, for, ere the year was out, he announced to McGlashan that he had a grand idea of a new weekly journal in his head, if he knew "of any simpleton willing to embark £10,000 to set it going."

He had some thoughts at this time of writing "Hints for Rambles and Residence Abroad," with views of society, scenery, literature, art, religion, and to convey "useful and entertaining knowledge for absentees and vagabonds." He considered that Southern Germany, the Tyrol, and Hungary afforded material for good *tableaux*. The idea, however, was not carried out. By way of excuse for this

Off we were carried ; and a fox of gigantic stature having seized us round the waist, the band was ordered to strike up, and round we went, greatly to our discomfort, in a spieces of maniacal polka."—P. 445.

How some duels were interrupted by the executive; and in the confusion how the Irländer tumbled over a fat German and broke his pipe, provoking him to exclaim "Teufel," further stirring reminiscences tell. (P. 447.)

and other literary shortcomings while at Brussels, he said that *pâté de foie gras*, with *champagne glacé* and *salmi de bécassine truffé* made writing more difficult than the low diet of Templeogue. He would soon start for the land of Micky-Rooney* and of Love!

His contributions to the Magazine were restricted by the then vexatious postal arrangements. Lever said that they weighed letters in Brussels like the Dutch settlers: every man's hand weighed one pound, and his foot less! Each clerk in the Post Office had a tariff of his own; and one little rascal, with a red head, screwed him up to more than double the price of his *confrères*.

From Brussels, as Mr. Pearce correctly states, Lever removed to Bonn, where he found himself delightfully situated in sight of Drachenfels, the tallest of the *Siebengebürge*, or Seven Hills. His seclusion here was disturbed (August, 1845), by the visit of Queen Victoria and the Prussian Court; every part of the Royal progress he describes as a web of blunders. The inauguration of Beethoven's statue by a band of 800 musicians, fiddling like madmen, and as many thousand voices, interrupted his work; and ended by his brains being, as he said, well-nigh blown out by symphonies in four flats.

Finally, the Queen and Beethoven together were accused of driving him out of Bonn, where he had been most comfortably and quietly housed. But the row, uproar, cannon-firing, loud huzzaing, grease-pot illuminating,

* Query, Maccaroni?

and Hoch Deutsche enthusiasm, that would explode within ten days, were announced by Lever as too much for him. Perhaps the real fact was—though Lever himself may not have been fully conscious of his own weakness—that he did not play first fiddle at the grand gala. The sensation he afterwards sought to produce daily by driving his cavalcade through the cascine of Florence and also at Carlsruhe, shows that his tastes were not ascetic.

Lever started for Coblentz and St. Goar, and after visiting the Rheinstein, which he described as in all the agony of preparation for a Royal visit, came on to Mayence. Here a letter from Miss Edgeworth reached him, so complimentary that he regarded it as more than compensation for some critical calumny that had caused him great pain, and went to the length of accusing him of concealed assaults on Nationality and the Irish people. He had higher motives and better objects, he said; but he had never stooped to purchase popularity by any subserviency to the prejudices of the people.

A removal was hastily effected to Baden-Baden. Mrs. Lever often deplored that her husband had ever left Bonn: why, we shall see.

That the combined colours of *rouge-et-noir* had fascination for Lever, may be inferred from one of the best chapters in "Lorrequer," where he is described as breaking the Bank. Lever liked *roulette* too; and, oblivious of the fact that the chances entirely favoured the owners of the tables, he surrendered himself to the excitement of both games.

In the Conversationhaus at Baden-Baden he was, for more than one season, a familiar figure. At first he won, but pursuing Reaction failed not to overtake him; and he at last left the region of the Black Forest very much in the condition of a game-cock with feathers plucked and plumage drooping. He had now more time for thought and inquiry, and ascertained that the Government of Nassau let the Conversationhaus to a knot of black-legs for a yearly rent of 35,000 florins, with an obligation to spend besides 250,000 florins on the public pleasure-grounds. The same company rented, with equally profitable results, the gaming-tables of Ems, Homburg, Aix, and Wiesbaden.*

Lever in his "Nuts" pillories the governments of small German States, who "finding a deficiency in their exchequer, have hit upon this method for supplying the gap, by a system which has all the regularity of a tax, with the advantage of a voluntary contribution. These little kingdoms, therefore, of some half-dozen miles in circumference, are nothing more than *rouge-et-noir* tables, where the grand duke performs the part of croupier and gathers in the gold." "Poor fellow," writes his fast friend Major

* Lever, in 1846, describes "a laughable incident which occurred last summer at Wiesbaden while we were there." The gist of it is that an English lady of rank, who had frigidly refused every man that asked her to dance, accorded the favour to a handsome German who spoke English like a native, knew every stranger in the town, had the names of all the travelling English at his fingers' ends—in short, he made himself so agreeable that the fine lady danced repeatedly with him during the night. "He must be in some public office in Wiesbaden," she said. "Yes," was the reply, "he is the Oberkellner at the Gasthaus von Rose." On consulting the dictionary it appeared that Oberkellner meant "Head waiter."

D—, "he made commendable attempts to retrieve himself by the pen and succeeded. These exertions he had to make more than once, and there can be no doubt that the work he did would have been in many instances much superior but for these spasmodic efforts; and not only that, but he would have got better and fairer terms from his publishers."

A paper of Lever's in the "D. U. M." for June, in the following year, honestly confesses—*en passant*—the folly into which he had been betrayed. "By the green-covered tables of Baden, we have stood the hazard of the die, among a crowd as reckless as ourselves; and having, with a quiet eye, seen ourselves cleaned out, we have carelessly tossed a last 'louis d'or' on the red, and with calmness watched the result. 'Messieurs, faites votre jeu;' the cross twirls, the ball spins,—unmoved we hear from the inscrutable croupier—'le rouge gagne,' as he pushes over to us a handful of gold. We have sought most kinds of excitement, and, with the exception of a run with the 'Blazers,' have stood the test of them all."

The fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of "Roland Cashel" written soon after — powerfully describe the reverses which the Baden tables brought him. We also learn the whisperings of the tempter Linton, whom we are specially told in the preface still lives. "The result of being fond of play," he tells him, "is a pleasure gained—one of the few resources which only a rich man can afford with impunity, so much the more fascinating, that it can be indulged in such perfect

accordance with every humour of a man's mind. If you are so inclined, you play low, and coquet with fortune, or if lavishly given, you throw the reins loose and go free. Now it seems to me that nothing could better suit the careless, open-handed freedom of your habits than the vacillations of high-play. It's the only way that even for a moment you taste the sensation of being hard pressed, while in the high flood of luck you can feel that gushing sense of power that somehow seems to be the secret soul of gold."

Since his early days at Innistiogue we have not seen much of Lever as a sportsman. The Magazine for June, 1846, describes "A day's deer-stalking with the Markgraf of Baden" down in a romantic glen where the Neckar stretched out like a great silver serpent." How the Irländer derived extraordinary excitement from these exploits and then drained the gold goblet, those who care to follow the progress he claims to have made with a double-barrelled Rigby would do well to consult his account of it.*

We next find him at Carlsruhe, with its miniature court and myriad throng. Lever shared Mrs. Gore's love for contrasting new people with the old. In few places were fuller opportunities to be found for study of this sort than Carlsruhe. The "Veneerings" were there; the "Dodds" were there. Carlsruhe itself was a new place, dating from the year 1715 only, when the Margrave built a hunting

* D. U. M., vol. xxvii., pp. 706—720.

lodge in the midst of a forest; but his retreat was soon invaded by other settlers, and "Charles's Rest," as he at first called it, became at last known as Karls-ruhe. It was the seat of government in Lever's time, and the capital of the Grand Duchy of Baden. Its compact court was a pleasant little *ménage;* and its legislative assembly, a decorous well-behaved body. Plenipotentiaries from foreign states promenaded the streets, and drove or rode in the Haardt Forest, from part of which the winding Rhine and the lofty Vosges might be seen. Of Kotzebue, who happened to be Russian minister at Carlsruhe, Lever saw much. Their friendship was strengthened by a neat translation into French which Kotzebue made of "The Knight of Gwynne."

He was much pleased with Carlsruhe, the stillest and cleanest of all German cities; and wrote Hayman to say it was a sweet place, where life glided on peaceably, and the current had neither ripple nor eddy. If it had no buoyant pleasures, it was equally without annoyances. No malignant newspapers, no candidly malevolent friends were there. For all blessings he was thankful. He had a capital house, a first-rate *chef*, six fine horses, and as for society—a little *corps diplomatique* of pleasant folk and their wives, with whom they lived on easy terms of familiar intercourse; meeting every evening somewhere and dining occasionally at the grand Duke's court when asked, all this very socially and very happily. There were neither beauties nor geniuses to make their wives jealous or themselves uneasy; and G. P. R. James and he

had a very comfortable time of it, the game all their own. The royal dinners took place at two, with lots of Grashen whist in the evening.

At Carlsruhe Lever kept open house: he laid an embargo on all his travelling friends, and specially stopped all who came or went by the Sprottau Pass—his house, like his guests, was always full. He had carried away with him from Baden the Gross Herzog's *chef de cuisine*, whose *menu* gave a constant foretaste of joys to come.

Through the straight and regularly built streets of Carlsruhe, which radiate from the Palace like the spokes of a wheel, Lever daily drove, puzzling people rather than creating the sensation he aimed to produce. One of his most attached friends through life and his daily companion at this time is reluctantly bound to admit that he was not without some eccentricities; such as "riding at full speed through the streets of Carlsruhe, with his children, and sometimes even Mrs. Lever, attired in very conspicuous habiliments, with long flowing curly locks of auburn, so that the people at first took him for a circus proprietor. Then too he infringed etiquette with regard to the court and its great officials."

People smiled at the simplicity and, as they supposed, the mistakes of the dashing Irishman; but we are disposed to think that a subtle philosophy guided these acts, full of amusement and health as they undoubtedly were to him. He once said that when Alcibiades cut a piece off his dog's tail to divert the scandal-mongers of Athens from attending to his more serious derelictions, he showed

how thoroughly he understood the fact, that men of eminence will ever be exposed to the libellous tongues of the smaller people around them, and that it is a wise policy to throw out for them some bait, in the pursuit of which they may lose sight of more important booty.

In reply to our inquiry as to how Lever violated court etiquette at Carlsruhe, we gather that he invited to a whist party at his house the Hof Marschall von Göler, or Lord High Chamberlain, who, however, failed to put in an appearance. Mr. Pearce, the amanuensis of Lever, never heard of the incident; but a higher authority is positive on the point. He writes:—

"Pearce is quite correct in stating that Lever usually went to the club at Carlsruhe to play whist, and it was precisely there that he met Von Göler, played with him and invited him with some others to come to his (Lever's) house to play. Amongst the others was M. de Kotzebue, Secretary to the Russian Embassy, who did come to Lever's, where I saw him, and the others whose names have escaped my memory. I was myself invited as a super, for I never play any game; and the fact of Göler's having been invited and not coming was mentioned, for they waited for him and afterwards played dummy. Lever was very wroth about it. You may be quite certain that it was so."

For a while jokes dropped at the expense of Grand Dukes. "In one of his gossipings with me," observes Hayman, "he said, 'A Grand Duke is unable from his

limited territory to take in a double number of "The Times" lest, while perusing the broad-sheet, his elbows should extend themselves into his neighbour Duke's territory.'" But hospitality covers a multitude of sins, and later on, Carlsruhe was described to O'Sullivan as "very pretty; with a good opera, plenty of society, and a most hospitable court, the 'Gross Herzog,'—or, as an English lady here called him, 'the Grocer's Hog'—particularly civil to English strangers."

His fine stud sustained a loss in the death by glanders of a beautiful Arabian which he had bought but a few weeks previously from the king of Wurtemburg for £150. As the disease threatened to spread to the other horses, Lever was full of anxiety. "A pot boiler," as he said, was now needful. He wrote to his publishers to say that a new story, to be called "Corrig O'Neil," was simmering in his head. "The title was that of a mountain on the banks of the Nore, co. Kilkenny, a new district to him." "New," no doubt it would have been to most readers, but not to himself. The recollections of his cousin, Harry Innes, Esq., appended to this volume, show how thoroughly familiar he was with the district in the hunting days of youth. The earlier chapters were sent to Ireland for the opinion of Dr. O'Sullivan; but the plan fell into abeyance, and "Corrig O'Neil" never appeared.

"In 1845," writes the major, "I found James, the novelist, with Lever at Carlsruhe and Baden. Carlsruhe was, I think, the last place at which James and Lever

met. James went shortly afterwards as consul to Boston,* from whence he was subsequently transferred to Venice; whilst Lever travelled through the Black Forest, by the Höllenthal, which he has described in one of his novels, to Bregenz on the lake of Constance, where he lived about a year, and thence over the Arlberg and the Finstermünz passes into Italy to the baths of Lucca, and then to Florence."

In July 1845, Lever severed the last link of his connection with the magazine on finding a paper in it of a most illiberal character. In earnest protest he writes to McGlashan. He did not think the Scot would insert what was likely to tell or sell, irrespective of other interests; and expressed regret that even a passing blot should stain the fair face of "Dea."†

Love of change once more egged him onward. His

* A good deal of indignation is expressed by the newspapers in October, 1853, at the attempted expulsion, from Norfolk, Virginia, by some Yankee patriots, of G. P. R. James, the novelist and British consul at Boston; and all in consequence of a song of which he was the reputed writer. "God forgive me," said Lever, "it was my doing." These verses appeared ten years previously in the "D. U. M.," and are headed "A cloud is on the western sky." They gave intense offence to the slave-drivers of the Southern States. Lever declared that he had no more notion of James's poetry exciting a national animosity than that Holloway's ointment would absorb a Swiss glacier. The lines may be found in the "D. U. M.," Vol. XXVII., pp. 341–2. Lever and James both wrote for the magazine at that time.

† "Ireland, her evils and remedies," was the title of the paper. A sample of its tone and style is afforded by the following passage:

"The Popish religion is at present *in* that state *in* this country *in* which the stimulus of a religious agitation is necessary for its existence. Without some such exciting and combining cause, it would very rapidly sink to the dead level of the very lowest of the people, and could not successfully maintain its ground against the inroads of knowledge and the progress of improvement."

predilection if not his pocket, he said, pointed to Italy. March, 1846, still found them at Carlsruhe waiting for the sun to get stronger and the days longer to be off to Switzerland, Italy, or Sicily—Heaven only knew! He had so many spots to visit that it might be said of him—

> "I am an Englishman, and naked I stand here,
> Musing in my mind what raiment I shall wear."

Summer was spent in the deliberation; and not until December do we find him in the Rieder Schloss.

"Lever, after leaving Carlsruhe," writes Dr. Parkinson. "resided in a palace which he had the use of; grandly furnished, for a marvellously low rent."* In the year 1845, we find him in the Tyrol† occupying the *château* alluded to by his friend. How he came to live there, he himself tells us in one of his last jottings from Trieste.

"I had travelled about the continent for a considerable time in company with my family, with my own horses. Our carriage was a large and comfortable *calèche*, and our team, four horses; the leaders of which, well-bred and thriving-looking, served as saddle horses when needed. There was something very gipsey-like in this roving uncertain existence, that had no positive bent or limit, and left every choice of place an open question, that gave one intense enjoyment. It opened to me views of Continental

* Letter, December 16, 1875.

† Major D—— writes:—"Properly speaking, the Schloss is in the Vocarlberg, and not in Tyrol"; but he adds, "these niceties Lever never cared much about. The Rieder Schloss, in which some of the best of Lever's creations grew, is now occupied by Sacré Cœur Nuns as a school for young ladies."

life, scenery, people and habits, I should certainly never have attained to by other modes of travel.

"Not only were our journeys necessarily short each day, but we frequently sojourned in little villages, and out-of-the-world spots; where, if pleased by the place itself, and the accommodation afforded, we would linger on for days, having at our disposal the total liberty of our time, and all our nearest belongings around us."

It may be observed parenthetically, that the same "delightful unsettledness of destination" when starting on a journey, always marked his books as well as his moves. His last preface to "The O'Donoghue," after noticing his original plan of story from which he finally wandered, says: "This is another instance of a waywardness, which has beset me through life, and left me never sure, when I started for Norway, that I might not find myself in Naples."

In the course of his rambles, Lever arrived, one day, at Bregenz, on the lake of Constance; "where," he writes, "the innkeeper, to whom I was known, accosted me with all the easy freedom of his calling, and half-jestingly alluded to my mode of travelling as a most unsatisfactory and wasteful way of life, which could never turn out profitably to myself or mine. From the window where we were standing as we talked, I could descry the tall summit of an ancient castle, or Schloss, about two miles away; and, rather to divert my antagonist from his argument than with any more serious purpose, I laughingly told my host, if he could secure me

such a fine old *château* as that I then looked at, I should stable my nags and rest where I was. On the following day, thinking of nothing less than my late conversation, the host entered my room to assure me that he had been over to the castle, had seen the baron, and learned that he would have no objection to lease me his *château*, provided I took it for a fixed term, and with all its accessories, not only of furniture but cows and farm requisites. One of my horses, accidentally pricked in shoeing, had obliged me at the moment to delay a day or two at the inn, and for want of better to do, I yielded so far to my host's solicitation—to walk over and see the castle.

"If the building itself was far from faultless it was spacious and convenient, and its position on a low hill in the middle of a lawn finer than anything I can convey; the four sides of the Schloss commanding four distinct and perfectly dissimilar views. By the north it looked over a wooded plain, on which stood the Convent of Mehreran; and beyond this, the broad expanse of the lake of Constance. The south opened a view towards the upper Rhine, and the valley that led to the Via Mala. On the east you saw the Gebhardsberg and its chapel, and the lovely orchards that bordered Bregenz; while to the west rose the magnificent Lenten and the range of the Swiss Alps—their summits lost in the clouds.

"I was so enchanted by the glorious panorama around me, and so carried away by the thought of a life of quiet labour and rest in such a spot, that after hearing a very specious account of the varied economies I should secure

by this choice of a residence, and the resources I should have in excursions on all sides, that I actually contracted to take the *château*, and became master of the Rieder Schloss from that day."

Every eye forms a beauty. Of its general belongings a poor opinion was entertained by G. P. R. James, the novelist, who expressed regret, for Lever's sake, "that he is likely to go to that detestable place, Bregenz. Spring, autumn, and winter, it is surrounded by frightful swamps which only dry up in summer to exhale most noxious vapours. You will all die of malaria; but I do hope he will not take the *château* which is likely to prove as pleasant a one as some of the gnome's castles in the fairy tales."

The romancist failed to wash off all romance from the castle. Lever liked it and staid there, and "The Knight of Gwynne" was conjured up within its walls, but he complains to Hayman later on that, despite his efforts to the contrary, his poor Knight showed a decided claim to the rueful countenance.*

* Lever lived so much in the realms of romance that, when he sent his memory to retrace bygone scenes, some embellishment unconsciously gilded the journey. A more matter-of-fact account is furnished by Mr. Pearce. "I went, by his particular wish, from Carlsruhe to the Castle—Baron Von Pöllnitz expecting me; remained there that night, and I returned to Carlsruhe. In consequence of my favourable report, Lever determined to take the Castle, and he and Mrs. Lever found the situation truly beautiful. They and the children left Carlsruhe in the large carriage, I followed to Riedenburg in part of the Black Forest, with four-in-hand, the carriage-horses as wheelers, and a gray and piebald as leaders."

Some mems. made at the time show that posting in Italy and the Tyrol cost Lever the double of travelling post in Ireland. In four days, Lever spent more than would keep for weeks all his horses, and they never covered more than forty miles of ground any one day: the cost averaged £10 *per diem*.

"The situation was most lovely," writes Mr. Pearce, "and the owner, Baron von Pöllnitz (having to resume his duties at Saxe-Coburg-Gotha as Chamberlain to the then reigning Grand Duke the brother of Prince Albert) was desirous of letting it."

Lever described himself to Hayman, at Christmas, 1846, as domesticated in the Rieder Schloss amidst Alps and glaciers 1700 feet above the sea, enjoying as little communication with the world without, as steep passes, eight feet of snow and a thermometer at 11° below zero could secure. Letters were a special boon, and the post-hour rivalled the dinner-bell in its attractions. Learning from his friend, that the festive season would be passed with his aged parents, memories of other days and of his own old home in Dublin came crowding upon him. He would give his right hand, he declared, to have a father and mother to eat his Christmas dinner with.

This was a dull festival with Harry Lorrequer. He tried to keep up the spirit of the season by a message to the Bursch of Germany. "A brother sends you greeting. May your Christmas tree blaze as richly as when I saw it last; may your Sclager be still as keen, and your wine as sparkling. A merry Christmas and a happy new year to my brethren of Westphalia."

"We soon all settled down at the Rieder Schloss," jots Mr. Pearce, "and the summer months passed rapidly away, with the children's lessons, the advancement of 'The Knight of Gwynne,' diversified with rides and walks in

the neighbourhood, trips to Ragatz and the Baths of Pfeffers, visits from M. Margueritte, a Frenchman married to an English lady, and Mr. Chapman (Lever's publisher) and his wife, besides occasional entertainments to the old and distinguished Austrian officer who commanded the Vocarlberg, and a young Esterhazy, who was stationed at Bregenz with his regiment."

It is remarkable that, while Lever's editorial orders to his staff were, in attacking the Repealers, to "cut boldly and fear not," he was, at heart, no unionist. Perhaps he felt with Plunket that, though opposed to the Union and to the means by which it was brought about, he yet was unwilling to apply for a divorce. Lever, though obliged to go with his party, was a patriot at heart; and he felt by no means sorry to relinquish a position which had brought him many thorns. He had not long vacated his chair and stretched his limbs and mind on the vine-clad slopes of the Bergstrasse, than early national instincts began crowding on him, and, with a patriot's fire, he thought of the old land far away. After referring to his subsequent sojourn in the Vocarlberg, where, in his castellated retreat he held baronial sway, Lever, writing from Trieste in 1872, the year he died, thus refers to the outburst of his convictions on the Union, and declares how all the intellect of Ireland had been dead against the Minister.

"If the scene in which I was living, the dress of the peasants, the daily ways and interests had been my prompters, I could not have addressed myself to an Irish

theme; but long before I had come to settle at Reidenburg, when wandering amongst the Rhine villages, on the vine-clad slopes of the Bergstrasse, I had been turning over in my mind the Union period of Ireland as the era for a story. It was a time rich in the men we are proud of as a people, and peculiarly abounding in traits of self-denial and devotion which, in the corruption of a few, have been totally lost sight of; the very patriotism of the time having been stigmatized as factious opposition. That nearly every man of ability was against the Minister, that not only all the intellect of Ireland, but all the high spirit of its squirearchy, and the generous impulses of its people, were opposed to the union, there is no denying. If eloquent appeal and powerful argument could have saved a nation, Grattan or Plunket would not have spoken in vain; but the measure was decreed before it was debated, and the annexation of Ireland was made a Cabinet decision before it came to Irishmen to discuss it. I thought it would not be uninteresting to sketch the era itself; what aspect society presented; how the country gentleman of the time bore himself in the midst of solicitations and temptings the most urgent and insidious; what, in fact, was the character of that man whom no national misfortunes could subdue, no ministerial blandishments corrupt." *

* There can be no doubt that, when writing his "Tale of the Union," he would have dealt severely with the statesman who was prime mover in that sea "of corruption" which, as he says, "remains with us as a national shame," were it not for the very favourable traits of him, which he had gathered from Sir Hamilton Seymour, who had acted as his private

Lever, in the desolation of the Vocarlberg, lived, like the bee, on the sweets he had previously stored. "Rhoudlum" was reproduced—the old ballad-singer, whom he so successfully personated when a student of Trinity—also his Portstewart experiences—with the ana he had gathered from the pleasant coterie at Templeogue.

His correspondence with Hayman, too, fed an occasional want, and continued at the Rieder Schloss while writing "The Knight of Gwynne." It was, perhaps, because he had nothing to fret about that he found himself low spirited when he sat down to write; his characters, in spite of all his efforts, rather deepened into depression; and the whole company which he called together to be pleasant turned out little better than a party of undertakers! He had already begun to dread the fate of his poor "Knight." As he searched his memory for pleasant thoughts about Ireland, he dug up one in the mountains of the far south in the rectory of Glanworth. This was the then residence of Mr. Hayman. By degrees he gathered more confidence, and wrote in better heart. The more dignified and thoughtful tone which marked "The Knight of Gwynne," in contradistinction to the books which had preceded it, was mainly due to the

secretary. Lever adds, that he has tried to represent him such as he was in the society of his intimates, his sincere belief in the honesty of men whose convictions were adverse to him, and who could not be won over to his opinions. It must be remembered, however, that Sir H. Seymour was not private secretary to Lord Castlereagh when carrying the Union, but to Lord Castlereagh when minister for Foreign Affairs many years after; and in the interim the tone of that statesman may have undergone as great a change as, within a shorter time, we find produced in Lever himself.

retired region where he worked. Mortimer O'Sullivan styled it the "best of the batch."

The following, his last preface from Trieste, tells. The character he sketches was doubtless that which he uniformly sought to present in his own person.

"A longer and deeper experience of life has succeeded to the time since I wrote this story, but in no land nor amongst any people have I ever found the type of what we love to emblematise by the word gentleman, so distinctly marked out as in the educated and travelled Irishman of that period. The same unswerving fidelity of friendship, the same courageous devotion to a cause, the same haughty contempt for all that was mean or unworthy: these, with the lighter accessories of genial temperament, joyous disposition, and a chivalrous respect for women, made up what I had at least in my mind when I tried to present to my readers my 'Knight of Gwynne.'" Lever states that his "character of the Knight was not altogether ideal;" and that "several persons concurred in the belief that he had taken as his model the Knight of Kerry." The present Knight, however, informs us that his father and Lever never met. "I have no reason to suppose," he writes, "that 'The Knight of Gwynne' was drawn after my father; the peculiarity of the title would inevitably give a colour to the notion, but I have no sufficient grounds for thinking it. You may not be unaware that a personage exists in Ireland known as the Knight of Glynne." Lever's "Knight of Gwynne" was a more carefully studied

performance than its predecessors. With steady aim he kept his leading characters under greater strictness of discipline, and made them "point a moral and adorn his tale."

The convictions of a true patriot found utterance when he said, "I have not tried to conceal the gross corruption or an era which remains to us as a national shame; but I would wish to lay stress on the fact that not a few resisted offers and temptations, which, to men struggling with humble fortune and linked for life with the fate of the weaker country, must redound to their high credit. All the nobler their conduct, as around them on every side were the great names of the land trafficking for title and place, and shamelessly demanding office for their friends and relations as the price of their own adhesion."

This otherwise exhaustive introduction is silent as regards the original of Bagenal Daly, who performs so important a part in it. But any person who has read "The Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation," by Sir Jonah Barrington, published at Paris in 1833, cannot fail to be struck by the account there given (pp. 184—5) of Beauchamp Bagenal, whose singular life and exploits is transferred, word for word, to the novel. "For Bagenal Daly," he simply writes, "I was not without a model;" leaving to his future biographer or annotator a tough point for research.

"The 'Knight of Gwynne,'" observes Blackwood, "is certainly one of the most lovable characters that Mr. Lever has ever drawn; and he monopolises so much

of our sympathy, that we hope to be forgiven for extending less of it than he probably deserves to Bagenal Daly, notwithstanding the vigour with which that character is drawn, the remarkable originality of it, and the fidelity with which it represents and sustains a most peculiar combination of qualities, intellectual as well as moral."

Though Lever opposed O'Connell, and while discharging editorial duties, waged war against Repeal, his latest political utterances favoured Home Rule. An "O'Dowd Paper" was rejected by *Blackwood* on these grounds, and the Proofs of it, presented by Lever himself, are now in the hands of the Rev. Joseph Galbraith, F.T.C.D. Letters to Mr. Spencer at this time state that he should like to see "Home Rule" but not "Rabble Rule." Popular sympathies mark his later writings. The beautiful "Nina" in "Kilgobbin—" that brightest heroine of his creation—after refusing all sorts of offers, is captivated by an escaped head-centre of the Fenians and elopes with him!

But there was no rebel feeling in Lever when at Riedenburg. The more he saw of other governments the more he valued the constitution under which he had lived at home. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder;" and, under the influence of this feeling, we find him raising the British flag on his tower, and his own voice at the same time in praise of it. The lines are unpublished, and we are indebted to Lever's amanuensis, Mr. Pearce, for having preserved them.

ON THE ENGLISH FLAG BEING HOISTED ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO, ON THE TURRET-TOWER OF RIEDENBURG, 1846.

Up! up with the banner! for Tyrol now sees,
'Mid her mountains so rugged and steep,
The flag that has braved both the battle and breeze,
And conquering waves over the deep.
Like one brilliant star in the darkness of night,
The red cross of England now see,
To cheer by its presence, and guide by its light,
The people that long to be free.
The lilies of France, that, so valiant of yore,
Are withered, or drooping, or dead,
And the Arab insults now the fam'd tricolor,
By Gaul's proudest chivalry led.
The Austrian banner floats not o'er the free
Its dark folds, the colour of night
Waves like a pall, o'er the fair Italy,
From that land where freedom saw light.
There's only one banner that never has failed,
One nation been foremost in fight;
There is but one people that never has quailed
To conquer or die for the right.
No star-spangled ensign, no banner of black
Can ever bring hope to the slave,
Like the red, blue and white, of our own Union Jack,
The flag of the free and the brave.

He had good opportunities, even here, of gratifying his old love for military spectacle. "The General and Camera," he writes, "dined here a couple of days since; the manœuvres were very handsome and picturesque; the troops bivouacked by moonlight in the Bregenzerwald, and the fires were all dotted over the hills, the cannon thundering away at sunrise, and the whole place alive with skirmishers!"*

* Lever wished to see in his new home the pleasant face of Phiz, with whom cheery days had been whilom passed, and to hear some literary gossip "from the big village." He invites him (Sept. 1845), to come and

It was about this time that another welcomed letter from Miss Edgeworth came. She told him how she had been in the habit of reading his story aloud to the audience of her nephews and nieces;—"a simple announcement," he writes, "that imparted such a glow of proud delight to me, that I can yet recall the courage with which I resumed the writing of my tale, and the hope it suggested of my being able one day to win a place of honour amongst those who, like herself, had selected Irish traits as the characteristics to adorn fiction."

But, if he was to go on writing, he must needs see more of the world. Again he craved for change. To Como his thoughts now pointed: Como—a spot, as he said, so beloved of opera dancers; the day-dream of prima donnas; the elysium of retired baritones!

It will be remembered that a MS. on the Tyrol was destroyed by fire at Curry's printing-office in 1841. Lever's thoughts reverted to an old and favourite subject

take a ramble through Switzerland and the Tyrol, promising to drive him with his own nags.

"I wish I could accept it, but alas—'Heigh-ho, Harry,' I can't—I have just taken a sort of a holiday and now must buckle on my harness again, and work, work, work! I will do the pretty for 'The O'Donoghue' title-page. I am in dreadful poor-law-union state of inanition regarding literary news. Of course you read or heard of Dickens's theatricals? Bulwer, for want of something else to do, is blowing the trumpet for the water doctors! 'To what strange uses,' &c. He must either have water on the brain, or a cataract in his eye."

Touching the illustrations for "The Knight," Phiz sends some of "the Heads of the People," and promises "to do his endeavours" strenuously to co-operate in making all the men brave; but the task of making the women virtuous he leaves to Lever.

in selecting the Tyrol as the theme of a new book. March, 1847, found him at work on some stories of Tyrol life. Addressing his publisher, he urged as an advantage that the theme not being an Irish one would be regarded with more favour by English readers; they being much in the condition of the man who could not enjoy Liston's acting because the actor owed him £10. This volume he had intended for a child's book; but, by an Irish blunder, he wrote about children instead of for them, and consequently travelled out of his title-page.

The Tyrol tales never appeared. He wrote to McGlashan, asking him to come and visit him in a villa on Lake Como which he had taken: he had another project which would not bear the garbling of a letter, though it might be beautifully discussed in a grape arbour. Even as a mere business one the journey would not be worthless to McGlashan, while to Lever it would prove a gratifying opportunity of recalling old memories.

A paper of his, called "Etchings of Italy," in July, 1847, tells us that to Como he was irresistibly attracted. "The diversity of objects which present themselves along the shores of this enchanting lake—the magnificent villas of the Italian nobility—the soft outline of the hills, clothed with olive, myrtle, and vines through which the frequent chapel rears its white bell-tower, the beautiful promontory of Bellagio, crowned with terraces and gardens, all form a scene well worthy

of the pencil of Salvator Rosa, or the glowing imagination of Manzoni."

A long account is given of Milan in this paper, and of a visit to the Larazetto in the City of the Plague. He mentions that "sneezing, as recorded by Thucydides, has always been a premonitory symptom of the plague, and reminds us that the custom still exists in Italy of saying 'Salute,' and in Milan as in Ireland 'God bless you' when a sneeze occurs."

He went on from Mantua and Cremona to Verona and Rome, visiting—*en route*, Venice—and the now deserted historic site of Pavia. He fell in love with the queen of the Sea, and bade, at last, a sad adieu. "Venice, farewell! long would we linger beside thy waters, charmed by the spell attached to the memory of an Age coeval with the brightest scenes of Italian glory; the age of Raphael and Michael Angelo, of Dante and Tasso."

All was not *couleur de rose*. "My University degree," he writes, "my commission in a militia regiment, and a vast amount of letters very interesting to me, were seized by the Austrian authorities on the way from Como to Florence in the August of 1847, being deemed part of a treasonable correspondence—probably purposely allegorical in form—and never restored to me. I fairly own that I'd give all the rest willingly to repossess myself of the Monsoon treaty, not a little for the sake of that quaint old autograph, faintly shaken by the quiet laugh with which he wrote it."*

* *Vide* vol. i. p. 254.

Enquiries made by the present writer in the hope of still recovering these papers, has led to the following remarks from one who discharged official duty in Austria under three successive monarchs. The details illustrate Lever's life and times. "I see no possibility of their ever being recovered. The revolutionary movements of 1848 threw the whole of the archives of the police office into the hands of the populace in the first instance, and of the Piedmontese authorities subsequently; and any one that pleased helped themselves to what they liked. Then came 'the Radedzky restoration' in 1849, and with it a new set of police officials, then the new exodus of these in 1859. It is possible that some of the archives may have been saved and sent to the East; or to Verona, Mantua or Venice, or perhaps to Laibach and Vienna, but who could trace these things? I don't wonder at Mr. Lever having been suspected of anything, travelling as he did, with piebald ponies, and wife and children with long flowing air. The police guards could not make out what he was or might not be, and then he had that peculiar defiant way of treating officials that seems to belong to many Irish persons whom I have known."

People who, many years ago, were brought into contact with Lever, describe him as nervous and retiring. Men thus affected often assume a brusque air, with the object of battling against nervousness, and masking its expression. Lever was painfully sensitive to rebuffs; and when we come to Florence it will be seen that some

folk who there offered marked discourtesies to him, were pilloried in his books.—Even the little clerk at the House of Commons who, on Lever's visit to London in 1865, repulsed his entry without an order, is noticed in "O'Dowd" as "the little man with the long body and the gauze spectacles, who sits at the door of the House and flings back your card so disdainfully when you have omitted the name of the member you fain would ask to protect you." Lever, a bashful man at first, became eventually the direct reverse. "The Law of Physics," he writes in "One of Them," "is the rule of morals, and as the swing of the pendulum is greater in proportion to the retraction, so the bashful man, once emancipated from his reserve, becomes the most daringly aggressive of mortals."

CHAPTER V.

Florence—Lever on the Cascine—The observed of all observers—Court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany—Mrs. Trollope—The Bagni di Lucca—Roland Cashel—Declines to write his own life—Maurice Tierney—Anster—Heavy pecuniary losses—Florence like a slumbering Volcano—Flight to Spezia—Stung by an electric fish—Eliot Warburton—Lever summoned to London as Director of the Conservative Press—Collapse of the negotiation with Lord Lyndhurst—Lord Normanby.

To Florence he now bent his course—"Firenze la bella"—that grand old Tuscan city on the Arno—famous for the picturesque beauty of its situation—the agreeability of its society—the antiquity and splendour of its churches—the variety of its theatres—the glitter of its mosaics—the stings of its musquitoes—the balm of its sunshine—the scorch of its scandal—its bracing breezes from the glacial Alps—its sculpture and paintings—cameos and *cafés*—"pleasures and palaces"—clubs and casinos—its libraries, frescoes, bronzes, bridges, gardens and gates!

Lever, attaching faith to a tradition gathered in boyhood, regarded Florence as the place where, above all others, he could live luxuriously, and yet cheaply. Time was when it deservedly bore this character, but Florence, of late, has become most expensive; and the place which had been so dear to Shelley's memories proved dearer

to Lever in a less pleasant way. Despite this drawback, however, he liked Florence, and most of those whom he met there; and its sociable character was, probably increased by the narrowness of the streets, where opposite neighbours could almost shake hands from the windows of their respective *entresols*. But villa-residences—shaded by fig and orange trees—abound for those who prefer them—villas of the character praised by Landor and Dickens in their letters home.*

One of these was the Casa Capponi.† Here Mr. Edward Dicey—an accomplished *littérateur*—became Lever's guest; and he traces the memory not without emotion.

"See again, one of the loveliest scenes on which one's eyes ever gazed. It is the early dawn on a summer morning such as Italy alone can boast. We are standing on a vine-clad terrace on the hill side of San Miniato; the faint rose tints of the sun rising behind the Arno valley, can be seen glistening on the heights of Fiesole, standing out clear and sharp against the deep blue sky; and from a sea of white mist, billows rolling at our feet, rise the countless domes and terraces, and belfries of the city of the Medici. It is the terrace of Lever's house outside the walls of Florence, and our host, after one of the long nights he loved, has hardly consented to let us go as

* Publishers had pitted Dickens and Lever against each other (vol. i. p. 228), but all pique had now passed. After praising Bulwer Lytton, Proctor and Thackeray, Dickens writes to Forster at this time, "I am very glad to find you making special mention of Charles Lever."

† For some time he lived in the Palazzo Ximines.

the daylight crept in through the open windows, has come with us to the garden gate to show us the way Florencewards. Not 'Addio' we can hear him saying, but 'A rivedersi.' Alas!" adds Mr. Dicey, "the kindly Italian greeting can be used no longer.

"He caught the true spirit of the Italian life far more faithfully than any of the Englishmen who have pitched their tents in the pleasant plains of the southern land. The Italy he knew and loved so well was not the ideal Italy of the Brownings; not the classical Italy of Landor—not the romantic Italy of Leigh Hunt, not the spiritualised Italy of George Eliot, but the actual living Italy, the land that loves life, and lives by loving it."

When we recall Lever's dramatic talent, as proved by the marvellously complete personation of Mr. Cusack, Rhoudlum, and other local celebrities, it is surprising that he did not seek more means to cultivate and gratify it. "In November, 1847," resumes Mr. Pearce, "I found Lever located at Florence, and residing in Cara Standish —a private theatre being attached to the house. I remained in Florence until the commencement of January, 1848, for I well remember Lever wanted me to postpone going on to Rome in order that I might act with him in 'The School for Scandal.' He was to play Charles Surface, and I was to play Joseph Surface. The Florence folk were specially appreciative of private plays. A previous amateur company at Florence included Lady Burghersh, Lady Normanby, and

the present Duke of Wellington. Lord Burghersh's house which by a coincidence belonged to the Princess Borgese, had been fitted up as a theatre. I returned to Florence in July 1849, and in my very slight diary I find that I was often making excursions with Lever to Pratolino, Vallambrosa, &c. &c. Catharine Hayes, the Irish nightingale, was a good deal with the Levers at that time—also Hoppner, intimate with Byron at Venice when English Consul. On my leaving Italy in January, 1849, I passed a fortnight with my dear friends at the Baths of Lucca, when I made the careful drawing of Lever's head, now before me as I write these memorials and shadows of the past." *

He was fortunate in finding at Florence two men filling dry diplomatic posts, but whose tastes were thoroughly congenial to his own. Mr., now Lord Lytton, Viceroy of India, had been transferred as attaché from Washington to Florence in February, 1852, and remained there four years. His love of letters was strong: he was a writer of great promise and power; but, better still, he was one whom to know was to love. Lever describes him as a fine hearted fellow, most companionable, and what the Italians call "simpatico." His correspondence, and that of Lord Malmesbury with

* In 1855, when Lever's face and figure had greatly altered, and not for the better, Mr. Pearce took a photograph of the popular author. Lever, on viewing it, exclaimed "The Rugeley murderer!" Portraits of Palmer, the murderer of Cooke, scowled at that time from every window. Lever had two small moles upon his face, ignored in Lever's portrait, but faithfully though faintly traced in Pearce's.

Lever is most full; and at a future day, a selection from it may be used.

The British minister at Florence was Richard Lalor Sheil, a brilliant Irishman and word-painter, famous as an orator, and as the author of "Evadne." "His native wit did not desert him by being transplanted," writes Lever, "and some of his French 'mots' were fully equal to his best English ones. At Florence he seemed but too happy to enjoy the first holiday in a long life of labour." Sheil was succeeded at Florence by Sir H. Lytton Bulwer, afterwards Lord Dalling, of whom Lever often speaks.

Florence though a small place opened a wide field for the study of character. The lacquered boot class bore but a slight proportion to the shoeless herd; yet Lever said "it contained a good sprinkling of well dressed, well got up men, who daily arise without the very vaguest conception of who is to house them, fire them, light them and cigar them for the evening. They are an interesting class; and have this strong appeal to human sympathy, that not one of them, by any possible effort, can contribute to his own support. They toil not, neither do they spin."

But it was Lever's lot to be thrown equally into the society of *diplomats* and demireps, swells and snobs, princes and pretenders, wits and worthies, snarlers and social men! The more he saw of life the more was he struck by the fact that the mass of mankind is rarely very good, or very bad; that the business of life is

carried on with mixed motives; the best people being those who are less selfish, and the worst being little other than those who seek their own objects with slight regard for the consequences to others, and even less scruple as to the means.

He justly felt that any uniformity in good or evil would be the death blow to that genteel comedy which goes on around us, and whose highest interest very often centres in the surprises we give ourselves by unexpected lines of action, and unlooked for impulses. "As this strange drama," he writes, "unfolded itself before me, it had become a passion with me to watch the actors, and speculate on what they might do. For this, Florence offered an admirable stage. It was eminently cosmopolitan; and, in consequence, less under the influence of any distinct code of public opinion than any section of the several nationalities I might have found at home."

There was a universal toleration abroad; the Spaniard conceding to the German, and the Russian to the Englishman much on the score of nationality; and "they did not question too closely a morality which, after all, might have been little other than a conventional habit. Exactly in the same way, however, that one hurries away from the life of a city, and its dissipations, to breathe the fresh air, and taste the delicious quiet of the country, did I turn from these scenes of splendour, from the crush of wealth, and from the conflict of emotion, to that green island where so many of my sympathies were entwined,

and where the great problem of human happiness was on its trial on issues that differ wonderfully little from those that were being tried in gilded saloons, and by people whose names were blazoned in history."*

Lever, therefore, selected as his theme "The Martins of Cro' Martin," a once influential race, residing in Ireland at a time when it was beginning to get that sense of distrust and jealousy between the owner and the tiller of the soil which, later on, developed itself into open feud. This book opens a fine view of Ballinahinch Castle—the famous palace of the Martins—the very stables of which had stalls of marble for sixty hunters.†

A preface to the "Dodd Family" tells us that Lever had not been long in Italy until he found that title by no means meant rank. Men assuming the arms of royal houses with Barons in abundance brushed past him at every step; but a visit to the *Archivio della Nobilta*, or Heralds' Office, at Florence exposed their cool pretensions.

Looking into the Libri d'Oro, it appeared that various small towns possessed the right to create peers, but that the adjacent municipality of Fiesole had made itself not less conspicuous than contemptible by the indecent facilities it presented to ambitious aspirants to grasp and

* *Vide* preface from Trieste in the last edition of "The Martins."

† How this old race tumbled to the earth, Sir Bernard Burke's thrilling "Vicissitudes" tell. Banished scions,—all lost but their honour,—have ever been favourite themes with Lever, as proved by "Luttrel of Arran," "Lord Glencore," "The Knight of Gwynne," and "The Martins." Few knew better how to make Ireland "smile through her tears like a sunbeam in showers."

wear Brummagem coronets. All this, however, is now at an end, and none but worthy heads receive a diadem. The disused factory at Fiesole was a trade speculation on plebeian vanity; and at one time not a few English thronged to it in quest of meretricious rank. But Fiesole had a more legitimate brightness about it. "One of Them" describes its sunny slopes, with a lovely landscape of the Val d'Arno at its feet. "O ye gentles, who love to live at ease, to inhale an air odorous with the jasmine and the orange-flower—to gaze on scenes more beautiful than Claude ever painted—to enjoy days of cloudless brightness and nights gorgeous in starry brilliancy, why do you not all come and live at Fiesole?"

The Tuscan capital was a gay place in his time. He specially liked its Cascine—the Hyde Park of Florence—full of bright parterres and brighter flower-girls selling bouquets with the languid grace peculiar to Italian life, or tendering refreshing fruit to the half-baked traveller in view of the vine-clad hills from which their baskets had been filled. Eventide, which in Italy brings increased life and movement, found the Cascine lit up with the glow-worm and fire-fly rushing in meteoric flight.

The Irish magazine for which he wrote supplied in May, 1856, a glimpse of the Cascine—or, as it is pronounced, "Kachiny": "On one side the gentle river stealing past beneath the shadowing foliage; on the other the picturesque mountains towards Fiesole, dotted with its palaces and terraced gardens. The ancient city itself is partly seen, and the massive Duomo and the

Palazzo Vecchio proudly tower above the trees. What other people of Europe have such a haunt? What other people would know so thoroughly how to enjoy it?"

Every nationality, we learn, is represented here; and "although a choice military band was performing with exquisite skill the favourite overtures of the day, the noise and tumult of conversation almost drowned their notes. In fact, the Cascine is to the world of society what the Bourse is to the world of trade. It is the great centre of all news and intelligence, where bargains of intercourse are transacted, the scene of past pleasure is revived, and where the plans of future enjoyment are canvassed. The great and the wealthy are there to see and to meet with each other. Their proud equipages lie side by side, like great liners; while phaetons, like fast frigates, shoot swiftly by, and solitary dandies flit past in varieties of conveyance to which sea-craft can offer no analogies. All are busy, eager, and occupied. Scandal holds here its festival, and the misdeeds of every capital of Europe are now being discussed. The higher themes of politics occupy but few: the interests of literature attract still less. It is essentially of the world they talk, and it must be owned they do it like adepts. The last witticism of Paris—the last duel at Berlin—who has fled from his creditors in England—who has run away from her husband at Naples—are all retailed with a serious circumstantiality that would lead one to believe that gossip maintained its own correspondent in every city of the Continent. Moralists might fancy, perhaps,

that in the tone these subjects are treated there might mingle a reprobation of the bad, and a due estimate of the opposite, if it ever occurred at all; but no. Never were censors more lenient—never were critics so charitable. The transgressions against good breeding, the *gaucheries* of manner, the solecisms in dress, language, or demeanour, do indeed meet with sharp reproof and cutting sarcasm; but in recompense for such severity how gently they deal with graver offences. For the felonies they can always discover 'the attenuating circumstances'; for the petty larcenies of fashion they have nothing but whipcord."

It never occurred to Lever that the whipcord of comment was wielded unsparingly over his own "turn out." Horses were his harmless hobbies, some of them of piebald hue, and these he drove *en grande cavalcade* through the crowded avenue of La Cascine. People gaped at his party as they passed, and more than one sarcastically said that the dashing Irishman must be Pablo Fanque, or Franconi from Paris. His children on horseback, and all very theatrically attired, usually accompanied him.

When not dashing through the Park or progressing *currente calamo* at his desk, or passing pleasant hours with the Baron French, he might be found, especially during the sultry hours of an Italian summer, sitting listlessly in front of a *café* reviewing mankind, or lounging at either the Jockey Club or Il Casino del Nobile, picking up character or playing whist. Not that he really

enjoyed those Clubs, for all foreign Clubs he declared were stupid. "The Club abroad is a room where men gamble and talk of gambling, but no more; it is not a Club." After etching painful portraits of the members he asks, "Can you fancy anything less clubable than a set of men like this? You might as well set before me the stale bon-bons and sugar-plums of a dessert for a dinner, as ask me to take such people for associates and companions. The tone of everlasting trifling disgraces even idleness." He thought Major Pendennis a fine sample of the English Club man, and recognized as the purest element of Club life "the nicely blended selfishness and complaisance, the egotism and obligingness."

Pleasanter it was, after one of those delightful dinners for which he seemed to hold a patent, to sit on the terrace of his villa sipping claret, in an elysium of creations of his fertile fancy, in view of a maze of richly wooded glens, from some of whose depths gushed the light spray of a boiling mountain torrent, and from others the blue smoke of some humble homestead curling upwards. In the distance mountains rose snow-capped and jagged, but at last brilliantly red as the rays of the setting sun kissed their brow; while, nearer home, the rich soil, rent with heat, threw up from its affluence yellow gourds and luscious melons. In cooler weather he danced and fenced in the same light-hearted way as in early school-days, when supervised by Montague and Satelle. Pleasantly challenging Captain M——, and, seizing the foil, he discarded the mask even when urged

to wear it, simply replying, "Of course you won't hit me on the face," and then proceeded to strike out with spirit and precision.

The Grand Duke's Court at Florence was a very splendid spectacle. His income was considerable; and the entire style observed in his household was in keeping with the solid gold plate from which his guests were hospitably served. He spoke English fluently, and, despite the drawback of a lame leg, he passed from room to room and from coterie to coterie, offering pleasant words to everybody.

At the receptions held by this Court, Lever was a constant guest. "In one part of the palace," observes Mrs. M——, "card-playing would be going on, while the intoxicating whirl of the dance would hold sway in another. When deep in his game of whist and with me as his partner, he often, on hearing some favourite air struck up by the band, flung down his cards, saying, 'I must give my little wife a turn'; which having done, he rapidly resumed his place at the game. The polka was at all times the dance of which he was most fond. Mrs. Lever was so small and he so fat that in heeling and toeing it I must admit he cut a rather comical figure, but all admired his abiding love for her; and he certainly looked supremely happy in her companionship.

"As his too solid belt of flesh increased, he gradually relinquished dancing, and remarked that nothing short of an Irish jig could tempt him to the effort. But

twenty years were pleasantly spent in terpsichorean indulgence ere obesity compelled him to abridge it.

"The only person before whom he seemed to collapse was a contemporary novelist, Mrs. Trollope; but he did not dislike 'blue stockings' as a rule, for Mrs. Somerville and Mrs. Browning, with both of whom he was associated at Florence, possessed in a high degree his personal regard. It was amusing to see his transparent manœuvring to avoid Mrs. Trollope being given to him as a partner at whist, and contrasted with the undisguised desire manifested by the lady to be Harry Lorrequer's *vis-à-vis*. In the Cascine, where he daily rode attended by his children showily attired, he presented an appearance calculated to provoke a smile. He never rose in his stirrups, but always allowed his plethoric person to be briskly jogged up and down like a horse soldier.* He could never make the vaguest approach to speaking Italian, but his action was expressive, and having become involved in some local lawsuit, he surprised everybody by dispensing with the aid of counsel, and undertaking to defend himself before the court; but what astonished us more was, he absolutely succeeded in obtaining a verdict

* This shaking, to which from choice he surrendered himself, was meant as a counter-irritant to sedentary pursuits, just as Sir A. Cooper got his carriage built without springs. His dislike to Mrs. Trollope, no doubt originated in a knowledge of her keenly observant eye and caustic pen, as proved by her books on America, Belgium, Germany, and Italy; it was remarked by Mr. Chambers, that her lash fell upon the mere superficialities of life, without aiming to check vice. Lever probably feared that he might some day find himself pilloried like "Hargrave," the man of fashion, or impaled among the superior people of society, as shown up in "the Lauringtons."

in his favour. In general he was the life and soul of the dinner-table, but if he thought he was invited to be drawn out, or to meet some specially funny man, he shut up for the evening."

One night when the ball-room was very hot, and Lever, surrounded by listeners, held forth for their delectation, Dr. G—— joining him said, "I like to get near you, Lever, you are always so cool."

Lever liked to meet a wit, but he detested droll people, or him whose smart sayings had been stereotyped in lead. Commend him to the man who would no more repeat a *mot* than Francatelli would reheat a cutlet.

He proposed some reforms, which if adopted would be a death-blow to "haw-haw" and a fatal injury to "you know." Maddened by the insufferable intrusions of leering buffoons, he at last flew at them with the sword of satire, and wished there was a society for the suppression of our droll people; not veritable wits—men of infinite jest, gossip, and humour—but the so-called drolls, who say dry things in a dry voice, relate stories dramatically, give imitations and sing songs—about whom there is nothing spontaneous, nothing of *à propos*.

Lever's conversational power was at its height in Florence. But Crampton had taught him to avoid monologue; and henceforth he disciplined into concealment the writhing impatience with which he listened to travelled fools, or to social bores, whose talk, as Sydney Smith said, was worse than earache. As a host, he

adapted his conversation like his carving,—giving a bit to each of his guests—not keeping all to himself nor allowing any one to have a monopoly.

In May, 1848, he meditated a trip to America, feeling that "a book in the half-serious tone of the 'Dodds' might take—not offend; and that America would be the best place for a man of his mould to settle down in." He wrote to McGlashan saying that had both gone there twenty years before, they might have made fortunes. Nor was he sure that they would not have been Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the States into the bargain. He, however, modified this view on being introduced to a leading American, with whom he had a long talk. Part of it he communicated to Mr. J. Adair. "I know, sir—great men are attended by circumstances peculiar; you are like Governor Rogers—read to-day and forgotten to-morrow." "From that day to this," said Lever, "I could never discover who was the great man to whom I was likened."

Revolution shook Europe, and a vast change had come over the spirit of that delicious dreamy Florence life which had so long made residence there a luxury. In February, 1849, Lever describes: "The streets, once thronged with gay groups intent on pleasure, or hastening from gallery to gallery, are now filled with beggars, whose demands too plainly evince that the tone of entreaty has given way to open menace. Burglaries and street robberies take place in open day, the utmost penalty of such offences being a few days', sometimes a few hours',

imprisonment. Nor is the country better off than the town. For upwards of forty years the insecurity has not been so great as at present. From the Alps to the sea brigandage is in full sway. Thrice within one week the diligence from Bologna to Florence was stopped, and the passengers robbed of everything, and in one instance, for some imprudent expression of anger, severely beaten."*

Lever fled from Florence, and took up his abode at the Bagni di Lucca—an inland resort in the Duchy of Lucca, provided with gaming tables, and a small court presided over by a royal duke. He liked the place greatly; it was picturesque and quiet, and not invaded by that miserably minded class of small English which he said were the curse of Florence—thereby giving a hint to some of the purse-proud who snubbed him. It is not so certain, however, that he liked its Grand Duke. Against such personages generally he had a marked prejudice, originating, as Major D—— believes, in a rude snub offered by one of them. A magazine paper expresses his views strongly, and points out the ludicrous mistake of comparing a foreign aristocracy with our own:—

"What is a Grand Duke? Picture to yourself a very corpulent, moustached, and befrogged individual, who has a territory about the size of the Phœnix Park, and a city as big and as flourishing as the Blackrock; the expenses of his civil list are defrayed by a chalybeate

* "D. U. M." for February, 1849, p. 210.

spring, and the budget of his army by the licence of a gambling house."*

These remarks had been suggested to Lever by seeing quoted, from "Howitt's Germany," a passage to the effect that "you may sometimes see a Grand Duke come into a country inn, call for his glass of ale, drink it, and pay for it. The consequence of this easy familiarity," said Mr. Howitt, "is, that princes are everywhere popular, and the daily occurrence of their presence amongst the people prevents that absurd crush and stare at them which prevails in more luxurious and exclusive countries." Lever admitted that princes do go into inns, call for ale, and drink it—a fact, however, which he put the less value upon, "inasmuch as the inn is pretty much like the prince's own house, the ale very like what he has at home, and the innkeeper as near as possible in breeding, manner, and appearance, his equal."†

All this is so characteristic of Lever that we give it; but it must not be taken literally. He well knew how to praise and vindicate the Grand Duke of Tuscany when hurled from his throne in 1849.‡ The Grand Dukes who were his special aversion were those of Baden and Lucca.§ From such swells he was glad to

* "D. U. M.," vol. xxi., pp. 323–4.

† *Ibid.* ‡ *Ibid,* "The Tuscan Revolution," vol. xxxiii., p. 531, *et seq.*

§ An important change of residence which Lever made during his continental sojourn was to a chateau belonging to the lord chamberlain of one of those Grand Dukes, but names need not be mentioned here. He rented it furnished; and part of the bait which had lured him on previously viewing the bed-rooms, were silver jugs and basins, belonging apparently to each; but

turn to the society of men of letters, when luckily they could be found. Occupying the same hotel with him at Bagni di Lucca was a congenial spirit, Mr. Honan, the correspondent of the *Times*. Lever was not so well pleased to find also under the same roof that irrepressible Blue and keenly observant sketcher Mrs. Trollope.

The spring of 1849 found his pen in more repose than his mind. What with the *fracas* of a royal duke just fled and a baby just come, incessant alarms of pillage, rapine, and Red Republicanism, he had been unable, he said, to think of aught else—trees of liberty and barricades impeded his progress. One good magazine paper, "The Italian Questions," predicted that the fate of Leopold of Tuscany would soon be that of Pio Nono. Both he strongly praised as reformers. In April, 1849, he wrote on "The Tuscan Revolution," which, as he foresaw, promptly came, and the Grand Duke, whose "sincere and single-minded desire for the happiness of his people had been the mainspring of all his actions,"* followed to Gaeta the fugitive Pope. Lever correctly gave it to be understood that the Republic could not last, but seriously doubted whether the Grand Ducal power

on entering into possession one set only could be found. It transpired that, according as Lever's party viewed each bedroom in the first instance, and ere they had left it, a zealous retainer adroitly carried away the silver basin and jug to the next, while at the same time completely carrying out the illusion. "Lever," writes one who accompanied him, "had also been dazzled by a bright flag which waved gaily from the turret tower; but a servant of the Lord Chamberlain's, whom Lever hired, told us that he had spent his wife's money building this castle, and both had long vegetated within on miserably straitened means."

* "D. U. M.," February, 1849, p. 531, vol. xxxiii.

could ever be re-established. His narrative of the Revolution is a valuable historic document, penned by the aid of no ordinary lights.

"Roland Cashel,"—planned on the lake of Como,—was written during a period of enjoyment which no part of Lever's after life approached in glow. When at last gloom laid its cold grasp on him, he would derive solace from casting a lingering look on the sunlit spots of past existence. Some weeks before his death, his pencil traced the following genial retrospect: "There, in a lovely little villa, the 'Cima,' on the border of the lake, with that glorious blending of Alpine scenery and garden-like luxuriance around me, and little or none of interruption or intercourse, I had abundant time to make acquaintance with my characters, and follow them into innumerable situations, and through adventures far more extraordinary and exciting than I dared afterwards to recount.

"I do not know how it may be with other story-tellers, but I have to own for myself that the personages of a novel gain over one at times a degree of interest very little inferior to that inspired by living and real people, and that this is especially the case when I have found myself in some secluded spot and seeing little of the world. To such an ascendancy has this deception attained, that more than once I have found myself trying to explain why this person should have done that, and by what impulse that other was led into something else. In fact, I have found that there are conditions of the mind in which purely

imaginary creations assume the characters of actual people, and act positively as though they were independent of the will that invented them.

"Of the strange manner in which imagination can thus assume the mastery, and for a while at least have command over the mind, I cannot give a stronger instance within my own experience than the mode in which this story was first conceived. When I began I intended that the action should be carried on in the land where the tale opened. The scene on every side of me had shed its influence; the air was weighty with the perfume of the lime and the orange. To days of dazzling brilliancy there succeeded nights of tropical splendour, with stars of almost preternatural magnitude streaking the calm lake with long lines of light. To people a scene like this, with the sort of characters that might befit it, was rather a matter of necessity with me than choice, and it was then that Maritaña revealed herself to me with a charm of loveliness I have never been able to repicture." An avalanche of adventures on land and sea was planned. Scenes rose before him of prairie life and lonely rides of the Pampas, of homes where the civilized man had never seen a brother, nor heard a native tongue. He speaks of the great hold the characters had taken in his mind; how they peopled the landscape around, but how winter drove him at last to move into Florence. "The new life of this place, and the interest they excited, so totally unlike all that I had left at my villa, effected a complete revolution in my

thoughts, utterly routing the belief I had indulged in as to the characters of my story, and the incidents in which they displayed themselves. Up to this, all my efforts had been, as it were, to refresh my mind as to a variety of events and people I had once known, and to try if I could not recall certain situations which had interested me. Now the spell was broken, all the charm of the illusion gone, and I awoke to the dreary consciousness of my creatures being mere shadows, and their actions as unreal as themselves.

"There is a sort of intellectual bankruptcy in such awakenings; and I know of few things so discouraging as this sudden revulsion from dreamland to the cold '*terra firma*' of unadorned fact. There was little in the city we now lived in to harmonize with 'romance.' It was, in fact, all that realism could accomplish with the aids of every taste and passion of modern society.

"Instead of the Orinoco and its lands of feathery palms, I had now before me the Arno and its gay crowds of loungers, the endless tide of equipages, and the strong pulse-beat of an existence that even in the highways of life denotes passion and emotion. What I had of a plan was lost to me from that hour. I was again in the whirlpool of active existence, and the world around me was deep—triple deep—in all cases of loving and hating, and plotting and gambling, of intriguing, countermining, and betraying, as very polite people would know how to do: occupations to watch, which inspire an intensity of interest unknown in any other condition of existence.

"I have been told that in the character of Linton I have exaggerated wickedness beyond all belief. I am sorry to reply that I made but a faint copy of him who suggested that personage, and who lives and walks the stage of life as I write. One or two persons—not more—who know him whose traits furnished the picture, are well aware that I have neither overdrawn my sketch, nor exaggerated my drawing."

Lever's power, as evinced up to this stage of his career, was dioramic rather than dramatic. In his constantly shifting scenes we find a kaleidoscope of sparkling adventure unpremeditated in the shape they are likely to take, but wonderfully bright when they come. More dramatic strength is visible from the birth of "Roland Cashel," in which deadly passions plot and work. If not at all times faultlessly artistic, his handiwork is always vivid. Like a true surgeon as he was, he had a lady's hand with a lion's heart. With practice he attained confidence, and every new success strengthened his hand. He could manipulate and manage the most tender emotions; and, at the same time, grapple with the strongest passions of Nature; and it was well remarked by the *Times*, that he continued to tone his subjects and his style down to his years; and so as his "admirers grew older, like himself, he carried the mass of them along with him. Indeed, the men who roared over 'O'Malley' are now, for the most part, lean and slippered, but as strong in love for their early friend as ever."

"Roland Cashel," published in 1849, was dedicated to G. P. R. James, who had previously inscribed a pleasant tale to Lever. The latter, with his usual modesty, presented "Roland" to James on the plea of that classic authority who, in the interchange of armour, gave "Brass for Gold." This was not the only Roland which Lever gave for James's Oliver. There was a perpetual interchange of bright compliments between them. The recollections of Miss Mary Boyle, whom Lord Spencer, later on, speaks of as "his cousin who enjoyed the friendship of Lever," furnish pleasant testimony on this point, as well as useful biographic detail.

"I first made acquaintance with Chas. Lever at Florence in 1848. My friend Mr. James had written to me and my mother urging us to do so. 'One of the most genial spirits I ever met,' he wrote, 'his conversation is like summer lightning—brilliant, sparkling, but harmless. In his wildest sallies I never heard him give utterance to an unkind thought. The old advice, 'If you like his works, don't make acquaintance with the author,' would have been mistimed as regards him. He essentially resembled his works, and whichever you preferred, that one was most like Chas. Lever. He was the complete type and model of an Irishman—warm-hearted, witty, rollicking, of many metres in his pen, but never unrefined; imprudent, and often blind to his own interests—adored by his friends, the playfellow of his children and the gigantic boar-hound he had brought from the Tyrol. He told me with great gusto how, on one occasion riding

with all his children in the glory of their Tyrolese hats, with peacock-feathers, they had been taken for a company of hippodrome riders, and accosted with the view to an engagement. He was an admirable actor, and resided in the Casa Standish on the walls at Florence, which contained a charming little theatre. We had constant dramatic representations. His impersonation of 'The Irish Tutor' was inimitable. I had the honour of playing Mary to his Dr. O'Toole,* and I certainly thought our 'jig' would have proved everlasting, so prolonged was it at the wish of the audience. His countenance, his whole frame was alive and aglow with expression, and the 'slight taste of the brogue,' was essentially musical from his lips. He loved a joke even at his own expense. One evening at 5 o'clock tea, at my house, where he met Lord and Lady Spencer, I took up a volume of Bret Harte† and read aloud to him part of a parody on 'a popular author,' where the Irish officer's horse at Waterloo clears the general's cocked hat and feathers, and 'that was the first time I found myself in the presence of the Duke of Wellington.' I then asked him if he could name the author from the style, and, with one of his ringing laughs, which always proved contagious, he said, 'Upon my soul I must have written that myself—it is so like me.'

"As I write, my heart is full of tender memories for the friend I have lost!"‡

* *Vide* p. 13, vol. ii., *ante*.

† See p. 422, *infra*, for an extract by way of sample.

‡ Letter of Miss M. Boyle, Venice, April the 21st, 1879.

Miss Mitford's letters at this time make frequent reference to Lever. "I should be delighted to see him," she writes. "You know I have always had a *mannish* sort of fancy for those 'O'Malley' and 'Jack Hinton' books, which always put me in good spirits and good-humour (I wish he wrote so now); and I remember, most gratefully, the pleasure his books gave to my father."

Lever's change of style, noticed by Miss Mitford, was first discernible in "Roland Cashel." Thenceforth we find more gravity and dignity, with less of the rollicking fun of boyhood in his books. It may be said that with "Roland" he bridged the gulf between the earlier and later series. Liston sighed to think that London mistook his talent, which he fancied lay in tragedy. Two great low comedians of our own day are found to be still greater in tragic *rôles;* and Lever fancied that he had made a similar discovery after he had been hammering away for ten years on the ringing anvil of loud farce.

Physicians are unanimous in condemning as unwholesome mental exertion after meals: but doctors of medicine, as of divinity, do not always practise what they preach. Lever generally went to work after breakfast, and laboured from ten till two o'clock, when he joined the children at dinner, and then rode, drove, walked and talked. The late dinner had been ordered from the *menu* regularly furnished to him at the breakfast table. It was an elaborate affair, full of joy to the epicure: but Lever never made a god of his stomach.

When describing his visit to Venice in 1847, he speaks with aversion "of those who could not stop to behold a splendid sunset, because dinner was waiting, and the soup would be cold, and who are afraid to venture out in the evening lest they might catch rheumatic gout."*

A work on the "Domestic Œconomics of Foreign Residence" was projected in 1850. He knew something of the matter, he said, to his cost, and he thought that the subject would not be uninteresting, as so many go abroad for cheapness. This book never saw the light.

Overtures from McGlashan, in 1850, to renew old relations with Lever, were hailed by the latter with great pleasure, and reminded him of Auld Lang Syne, when hope was fresher with both. It was arranged that a new tale, called "Maurice Tierney," should be supplied in monthly instalments, but Lever declined to write a memoir of Samuel Lover for divers reasons—needless to detail: the ninety-ninth reason, he said, which Governor Gomm gave for not saluting the garrison was—they had no powder!

Would Lever, then, furnish—*sub rosa*—a memoir of himself, to be utilized by another hand? To this suggestion he was equally opposed. Not that his crave of praise would be too gross even for his own taste, as he explained; but he could not enter into any defence of his motives and intentions in his portraiture of Irish character, without betraying his identity and showing

* "D. U. M.," p. 89, vol. xxx.

that he was his own advocate. He was conscious in his own heart of better aims and objects than it is the habit to give him credit for. The attempt must be a weak one which has not been appreciated, and the time would yet come when it shall be. In either case he would not be the sign-post to himself. Like old Woodcock in the play, his cry was "No money till I die." When that happened some one would be found to say whatever ought to be said of him, without the pain of hurting him, or the risk of exciting animadversions from less generous critics. He made no choice, and was ready to take his chance!

His plan in "Maurice Tierney" was to follow the great political changes that have darkened or enlightened the map of Europe, from the great French Revolution of '92 down to the little ones of '48 or '49; making his hero a wiser man as he grew older—less of a Democrat, he said, but not less of a Liberal. This book enjoyed the great advantage of John Lever's revision—and the letters in which the proofs were returned to McGlashan are full of point.

Some of the earlier chapters being short, Lever assured McGlashan that the next would be full and a bumper: the tap, he hoped, was good, if the measure was deficient. The story sped, but McGlashan considered "Tierney" rather an unlucky wight, and again Lever sought to console the shrewd Scot by promising that Tierney should have a long run on the red, for all his losses in black.

In November, 1850, Lever was busy preparing for a journey to Rome with his family, and had only time to send a few pages, but preferred to send even a link than leave the chain broken. The removal of a long retinue to Rome was not so easy as when a man's effects could be put in a carpet bag. A loan he had made, and which he now began to suspect would never be repaid, had given him a sore blow in what he styled his "financial bread-basket," and at a time, too, when the increasing expenses of his family exacted greater outlay, so that he was still swimming against the tide, and getting, he added, terribly tired of the exertion.

Dr. Anster, author of a fine translation of Goethe's "Faustus," warmly praised by Coleridge, had just reviewed Lever in very laudatory terms. The author thanked Anster nicely. He knew few men by whom he would rather be praised, even with exaggeration. He felt more obliged to him for his friendly tone, than for all the ingeniously turned compliments. The author had died out of him many a day since—the man was as much alive as ever.

Two loans, which seemed not likely to be repaid, and a heavy loss at play, crippled Lever hand and foot, and preyed upon him mentally to that degree that for days together, as he said, he could not write a line, and when his matter had been written and sent off really forgot whether it were actually committed to paper, or was lying crude in his brain. To retrench in Florence, where they had always lived in the best and consequently the

most expensive set, would have been, he said, impossible. To leave it would have incurred great expense; and so, horned by the dilemma, Lever described himself as alternately fretting and hoping, writing, dining, riding, and talking away—to all seeming the most easy minded of mortals, but, as Hood said, "sipping champagne on a tight-rope." At last one of the men he had accommodated threw him, by way of payment, in March, 1851, a series of bills for £50 each at successive dates for a year. These he could not get cashed in Florence under 20 per cent. Lever loudly complained of the fiend-like conduct of one party, and the Jewish rascality of the other.

His letters of this time, dilate on the sad fate of Eliot Warburton. He had been recently lost in the "Amazon," just as another friend of Lever's, Tyrone Power, had previously found his tomb in the "President." Lever was painfully struck by finding that Warburton, in one of his books, makes a leading character perish in this way, and describes, with thrilling fidelity, the terrible spectacle of a ship on fire. Warburton, Hayman, and O'Sullivan were three fast friendships formed by Lever in Ireland. The shamrock he had cultivated was now broken. By voice and pen he urged the tardy recognition of eminent powers in the promotion to the See of Meath of Mortimer O'Sullivan, but Dr. Singer got the mitre vacant by Dr. Townsend's death.

Lever's family were much alarmed in March, 1851, at hearing that Florence was on the eve of a great row—

that the anniversary of the Milan revolt was to be celebrated by a fresh outbreak. Prince Leichenstein, who commanded there, dined with Lever, and said that if they were afraid they ought to move off before the 14th; but as Lever never believed that Italians could tell truth, he vowed to a friend he would not budge. And he continued to sit on the slumbering volcano. When, at length, he did move, which was not till August, it was the intolerable heat that drove him out of it. He described the nights as having ceased to become colder than the days—sleep was unrefreshing and all appetite gone, and that the pale faces of his poor children left him no alternative but flight to Spezzia. Since his arrival there they had lived on the water—the delicious blue waves of the Gulf. Of all the spots he had ever seen, Spezzia was the most beautiful, and he told his publishers, in reply to appeals for copy, that he could actually do nothing, think of nothing, but sit on the rocks, half-nude, with his children, and dream away the whole day.

Continued happiness like this was too much to hope for on earth. When bathing in the blue waters of Spezzia (Sept. 1851) he was roused from a delicious dream by the sting of an electric fish, which caused his arm to swell to an immense size, accompanied by terrible inflammation and excruciating pain. By leeching he at length subdued the torture, but he described himself as much pulled down, and robbed of all the good that the sea-air had at first effected. He was now preparing to

arrange his ideas in train for a grand series of tableaux: but again his patience was put to the test. He complained that the hotel which he selected had of late been completely given up to all that piano-playing, guitar-twitching, sol-faing and yelling which every one in Italy indulges in, more indeed in public than in their own homes.

"In 1852," writes Major D——, "when the Conservative Ministry came into power, Lever was summoned to London for the purpose of being made director of the Conservative Press, in the way in which Mr. Delane was of the Liberal one. I suspect it was the present Lord Derby, and also Sir H. D. Wolff, who had him brought over. Lever was sent to Lord Lyndhurst, then a very fine old man, but very deaf. Lever recounted the interview to me in nearly the following words:—'I was shown into a room where Lord Lyndhurst was seated at one end of a long table, he motioned me to take a seat at the other end. I saw at once that he was a wonderful old man, with whom no one could dare to trifle or waste time, besides which I had been cautioned that he was very deaf. So I determined to be as brief as possible, and go directly to the point. So when his Lordship said, 'Well, Mr. Lever, what principle do you propose for the direction of our Press at this time?' 'As much good sense, my lord, as the party will bear.' 'That will do, Mr. Lever, that will do.' So Lever made his bow and retired, and at a meeting of the Leaders at the Carlton, held immediately afterwards, Lord Lyndhurst was asked what arrange-

ment he had made, and what Lever's views were, to which his Lordship replied, 'Perfectly satisfactory. I quite enter into Mr. Lever's views.' But in this Lord Ellenborough, or Lord Redesdale (I forget which Lever named to me), was not satisfied with so general an answer, and insisted on details, which were at length given them, to their no small discomfiture. The whole arrangement fell through, but why, I do not know. I believe the Tories went out, or did not come in, and Lever went back to Italy." Lord Derby, in fact, ceased to be Premier in December, 1852, and was succeeded by the Aberdeen, Russell, and Gladstone Administration.

In London the friendship with Thackeray, which began at Templeogue and was fostered at Florence, was fed into fuller flame. That great brain poured its counsel into Lever's ear, and sought to dissuade him from embarking in the career of a journalist.

He was not, indeed, the man to make an effective political editor. Canon Hayman writes: "McGlashan at times claimed despotic powers in the management of his magazine; and when Lever was editor he annoyed him by inserting and refusing articles, *proprio motu*. But it is only fair to say that in very many instances McGlashan had greater discrimination in these things than Lever. He was calmer, less impulsive, and, I may add, more wary about rocks ahead that might have wrecked the periodical. Albeit flattering to myself, I was never able to reconcile with editorial duty, Lever's accepting and inserting unread whatever I sent him, whether in

prose or verse." The sort of newspaper likely to prove most congenial to his tastes was a periodical, which, in March 1850, he meant to call *The Week*, and to consist of certain sub-divisions, such as The Week's Literature, The Week's Politics, and The Week's Foreign News, The Week's Gossip, &c.; "as far as might be, a light squibby affair, and taking in every variety of subject and matter."

It is recorded of Lever's great contemporary, Dickens, that he at last began to fear "lest his head should split like an ignited shell" (iii. 37). It was the weekly journal of Dickens that mainly brought him to this crisis; and perhaps it is hardly to be regretted that Lever's various schemes in journalism were not carried out. Lever boasts of the "spring" in his temperament, while Dickens gloomily records, "The spring does not seem to fly back again directly, as it always did. Hypochondriacal whisperings tell me that I am overworked."*

Pleasant and constant intercourse subsisted between Lord Normanby and Lever at Florence. Time was when the Earl of Mulgrave received slashing blows from Lever's arm; but the tomahawk was now buried, and the ex-Whig Viceroy and the ex-Tory editor associated nightly as brother novelists and genial neighbours. Lever inscribed "Davenport Dunne" to Lord Normanby

* In Macready's "Reminiscences," edited by Sir F. Pollock, it is stated that, besides Dickens and other men of letters who waited upon the Tragedian, on February the 20th, 1851, previous to his retirement from the stage, was "Lever" (p. 370, vol. 2). In the contents this gentleman is described as Charles Lever the author, no doubt incorrectly, for letters of Lever's, dated Florence, February the 25th, 1851, complain of illness by which he had recently been prostrated.

in terms of just laudation; but true to old habit of never revising, he allowed to appear in his reprinted "nuts" the statement that Lord Normanby "raked up all the properties and faded finery of the Castle, and made a kind of Drury Lane representation of a court; and that an eternal leer of self-satisfied loveliness rested on his features." Even after Lord Normanby read this the same bland expression greeted Lever.

Some articles on Italy which he contributed to magazines in 1852 attracted the notice of Lord Palmerston. Sir Lytton Bulwer told Lever that they had been cut out and forwarded to him from the Foreign Office; but Lever in acknowledging his letter expressed a fear that they would not do much for him with Lord Malmsbury. His powers of political perception were remarkable. Events which have since come to pass, including the giant strides of Germany, are foreshadowed in his letters with startling accuracy.

CHAPTER VI.

Con Cregan—Sir Jasper Carew—Baron Ward's Reprise—Proposal of office from America—Alarming Accidents—Swell Guests—Visit of the Duke of Wellington and Thiers—"The Day's Ride"—Thackeray prescribes Thrift for Lever—"The Dodd Family Abroad"—Parallel between Lever and Smollett—His dislike of Revision—The guest of Lord St. Germans in Dublin—The Career and Death of Charles Lever, Junior—Described by his Brother Officers—The Father's strong Sense of Manly Rectitude—His love of Display—Prompt to resent and to be reconciled.

"Con Cregan," published by Orr, was undertaken at the suggestion of the same "old school-fellow" of whom Lever makes honourable mention in his preface to "The Daltons." "I happened at the time," writes Major D——, "to get a Spanish version of 'Gil Blas,' which I preferred very much to the original French; and I wrote to Lever saying so, and adding that he ought to try something in the 'Gil Blas' style. It was while he was living at Bregenz, and I know that he had at that time run himself out of money from his losses at the Baden-Baden gambling table, and his train of horses and poneys, &c. It was a regular pot-boiler. 'Con Cregan' was therefore a failure."

"Con Cregan" was, as Major D—— says, "a pot-boiler;" but unless the true fire was in it, the crucible would not have boiled. That it boiled very much to

the purpose we know on high authority. "The Daltons" was appearing at the same time as "Con Cregan," and Lever in a scarce preface—afterwards withdrawn—tells us that "For one notice of 'The Daltons' by the Press there were four of 'Con Cregan,' and while the former was dismissed with a few polite and measured phrases, the latter was largely praised and freely quoted. Nor was this all. The critics discovered in 'Con Cregan' a freshness and a vigour which were so sadly deficient in 'The Daltons.' It was, they averred, the work of a less practised writer, but of one whose humour was more subtle, and whose portraits, roughly sketched as they were, indicated a far higher power than the author of 'Lorrequer.'"

The unknown—for there was no attempt to guess him—was pronounced not to be an imitator of Mr. Lever, though there were certain small points of resemblance; for he was clearly original in his conception of character, in his conduct of his story, and in his dialogues; and there were traits of knowledge of life, in scenes and under conditions to which Mr. Lever could lay no claim. One critic who had found out more features of resemblance between the two writers than his colleagues, uttered a friendly caution to Mr. Lever to look to his laurels, for there was a rival in the field possessing many of the characteristics by which he first won public favour; but with a racy drollery in description and a quaintness in humour all his own. "It was the amusement of one of my children," writes Lever, "at the time to collect

these sage comments and torment me with their judgments, and I remember a droll little note-book, in which they were pasted, and read aloud from time to time with no small amusement and laughter." Here he subjoined a long series of "Opinions by the Press."

We trust that our esteemed correspondent, "the Major," will not think it discourteous of us to offer evidence with the object of showing that "Con Cregan" was not, as he thinks, a failure; but when he remembers that it originated from a suggestion of his own, the success which we claim for it cannot be unwelcome news.

Lever goes on to say :—"It may sound very absurd to confess it, but I was excessively provoked at the superior success of the unacknowledged book, and felt the rivalry to the full as painfully as though I had never written a line of it. Was it that I thought well of one story and very meanly of the other; and in consequence was angry at the want of concurrence of my critics? I suspect not. I rather imagine I felt hurt at discovering how little hold I had, in my acknowledged name, on a public with whom I fancied myself on such good terms, and it pained me to see with what little difficulty a new and a nameless man could push for the place I had believed to be my own. 'The Daltons' I always wrote, after my habit, in the morning; I never turned to 'Cregan' until nigh midnight; and I can still remember the widely different feelings with which I addressed myself to the task I liked, and to a story which, in the absurd fashion I have mentioned, was associated with wounded self-love."

The original preface to "Con Cregan," though anonymous, was unmistakeably Leverish, with the exception, perhaps, of a passage wherein he speaks of having been the friend of Talleyrand.

Lever well knew that to run an opposition coach on the line he had made his own might be attended with some peril; and *à propos*, would tell a story which Bianconi once told him. To popularise a road on which few people were then travelling, and on which his daily two-horse car was accustomed to go its journey with two or three passengers, the idea occurred to Bian that he should start an opposition conveyance in perfect secrecy, and with every outward show of its being a genuine rival. He effected his object with such success, that his own agents were completely taken in; and one day when the struggle between the competitors was at its height, one of his drivers rushed frantically into his office, crying out, "Give me a crown piece to drink your honour's health for what I done to-day. I killed the yallow mare of the opposition car; I passed her on the long hill, when she was blown, and I bruk her heart before she reach'd the top." "After this I gave up the opposition," said Bianconi; "mocking was catching, and I thought that one might carry a joke a little too far." "I had this experience before me," Lever writes, "and I will not say it did not impress me. My puzzle was, however, in this wise. I imagined I did not care on which horse I stood to win.

"An American officer, of whom I saw much at the time,

was my guide to the interior of Mexico; he had been originally in the Santa Fé expedition, was a man of most adventurous disposition, and a love of stirring incident and peril, that even broken-down health and a failing constitution could not subdue.

"It was often very difficult for me to tear myself away from the Texan and Mexican experiences—his wild scenes of prairie life, or his sojourn amongst Indian tribes—and keep to the more commonplace events of my own story; nor could all my entreaties confine him to those descriptions of places and scenes which I needed for my own characters.

"The saunter after tea-time with this companion, generally along that little river that tumbles through the valley of the Bagni di Lucca, was the usual preparation for my night's work; and I came to it as intensely possessed by Mexico—dress, manner, and landscape—as though I had been drawing on the recollection of a former journey. So completely separated in my mind were the two tales by the different parts of the day in which I wrote them, that no character of 'The Daltons' ever crossed my mind after nightfall, nor was there a trace of 'Con Cregan' in my head at next morning."

For a long time Maurice Tierney continued to make his monthly bow, "put through his facings," by the more disciplined judgment of John Lever, as will be seen by reference to page 131 of our first volume.

McGlashan urged Lever to keep to probabilities, *vice* "Creganisms." Lever obeyed, but feared that he was

thus driven to a semi-historical dryness which, if it carried a mock air of truth about it, lacked all the spicy smartness of a flaring piece of fiction. He had told him, however, that the plated article would look best; and he half suspected that it would wear just as well as the solid material.

It was now time to put more activity into the hero. Lever decided to throw him at once into the great campaign of Italy, and give Marengo in full theme in rapid sketches through the great wars of the Empire to the abdication. With the return of the Bourbons, Paris appears only an amusing scene, and society there would give ample material, from which he could diverge either to New Orleans, or the struggle in Poland at Ostrolenka, where the Russians received a signal smashing. Moreover, the young ladies must be thought of; and a story without love would be as a dinner without a *rôti*. Tierney's career temporarily merged into the historic adventures of "Wolf Tone," the jump from '98 to 1831 being nothing to a man accustomed to aerial bounds.

On its completion, Lever arranged to write in monthly parts a new tale, to be called "Sir Jasper Carew." He had a strong predilection for the Irish gentleman of the old school, and he said that, whether he interpreted the character aright or not, he had always felt it to be the most picturesque bit of nationality of modern times. "Maurice Tierney" had appeared in the double columns of a magazine. Lever now begged McGlashan to print "Carew" across the page like "O'Leary," as he always

felt, when in double columns, like dancing a hornpipe in fetters.

A repetition of the mishap which befel the Lorrequer MS. attended the transmission of "Sir Jasper" which, instead of going to the publisher in Dublin, was carried off to Bœotia in Greece, leading to delays, doubt, and difficulties. These he grappled with and surmounted, but just as he got into vein for work he declared himself floored for want of certain information about the politics of 1782, and was driven to a personal detail instead of what he wished—a political picture. McGlashan directed his attention to a mass of old newspapers for sale. He replied that if it seemed an available shaft to work, by all means to send them.

It was about this time that Lever introduced a highly coloured portrait of O'Connell, called Counsellor O'Bluster; and his daughter, stung by its point, retorted in a travestie, "Sir Jasper Hooroo!" A character in "The Knight of Gwynne" was moulded from the same model.

McGlashan, in one of the testy moods which preceded his break up, put the extinguisher on "Sir Jasper Carew" somewhat sooner than Lever wished; and before he could accomplish a favourite object of bringing out the contrast of "Humbert's Career,"* he complained of being obliged to huddle up his catastrophe, and half good-humouredly, sketched, for the publisher, a pyramid with

* The Commander of the French Expedition to Ireland in 1798, when a disgraceful rout of the British troops took place at Mayo, known as "the Races of Castlebar."

very broad base, and a premature point abruptly completed. He sought Mortimer O'Sullivan's opinion of the ending in which, as he said, he always broke down, especially when he took most pains; but in this instance he threw off the final chapters *currente calamo*, and with more ease to himself than he usually felt at the close of a chase. Mortimer expressed strong praise; McGlashan was a little captious. Lever, always good-humoured, replied that if he failed to like the ending, he would give it another turn willingly—anything in the world, even to marrying Sir Marmaduke to Mrs. McKelly, and Lanty Lawlor to Miss Travers. McGlashan was at last appeased; and Lever proceeded to pack his trunks for Switzerland.

Another publisher, who overstepped his province by acting the critic was Mr. Orr, who, as Lever said, got into an allegorical kind of Paternoster Rowism, which actually floored him. To Orr, he explained that people of the soft south never like what takes time, trouble, or patience to comprehend; but prefer having their intelligence, like their macaroni, easy to eat, and easy to digest. As regards "Sir Jasper," he did not know whether his conclusion was in accordance with poetical justice, in lending library traditions; but he believed the book as a whole was better than its predecessors, on the principle of the Vicar of Wakefield's criticism, "because the painter took more pains with it."

In giving to a friend an account of a dinner party, at which he was a guest, where between Lord Minto and

the English ambassador sat a quondam Newmarket jockey, who had come to Florence as a groom, and was then the Baron Ward, Prime Minister of Parma, Lever declared that fiction was commonplace, and that it was truth alone overstepped all the bounds of likelihood. He said this to a friendly critic, who accused him of putting improbabilities in his books. Ward, he said, was a man of not more than average ability; but he had an indomitable will, great perseverance, and thorough integrity—three characteristics which had the merit of being exotics in Italy. Nothing in all his works, he added, could approach the real events that he himself had witnessed in life; and if they would bear telling, which they did not, he might reveal incidents beside which all his own coinage would be a tame and sorry piece of invention. Later on, Lever in writing introduced the character of the lucky Baron, which elicited from Ward a letter remarkable for its consummate good humour and unaffected geniality. When Lever took liberties with probabilities he made the recompense of rendering all the filling-up as real and life-like as he could. In telling the story of "Sir Jasper," his object throughout was to make it as like a man's own revelations as he could; blending incident and reflection, fact with commentary, and very often exaggerating minor events into an importance that selfishness alone could give them.

Wonderful incidents were worked into the history of Sir Jasper Carew. Lever remarked to a friend, in November,

1853, that few would suppose he had anything like authority for them. But in the Bachelor House, kept by the late Lord Hertford, Admiral Payne, and Sir L. Byng, an incident did occur very similar to what is told in the book, and need not here be repeated. A woman was the chief personage, whose name must be veiled. The information, both as regards the locality and the episode, came from a member of the noble house referred to.

He altered his plan as he got on. It was imperative that Carew should not resemble Tierney, and therefore not take to soldiering! The time he had brought him to Paris was a most stirring one, but Lever had no leisure to linger over it, as his man must be pushed on boldly. The story took strong hold of him when alone; even in his sleep he was unable to get rid of the characters; and Lever only hoped that he might be able to make part of this exciting sensation felt by future readers. In this hope he cheerfully put up with the Old Man of the Mountain who, day and night, bestrode him. McGlashan avowed himself puzzled over the plot. Had the mystery of Sir Jasper baffled the cannie Scot, as Lever confessed that it had begun to addle himself? From Sir Emerson Tennent, of whom he saw a good deal at this time, he gathered some threads of the tangled skein. It is only surprising that Sir Jasper presented himself so free from blunder, and did not more resemble Sir Lucius O'Trigger. In vain had Lever begged McGlashan to send him duplicate proofs as the only effectual mode of preventing repetition; and more than once he implored him to keep

a watchful eye over the proper names, "and that Jasper's various aliases should not be multiplied at the will of *the Devil.*" Quoting the adage, he said, certain people should have good memories; but although one of the guild, his own, he added, was deplorable. These worries were again crowned by a repetition of that miscarriage of MS. which had once put Lorrequer so much about. Capel, the king's messenger, brought Sir Jasper to Constantinople instead of to England.

The serious illness of his son at this time greatly unmanned him, and put him, as he said, off his work. In his desire to please McGlashan, by "quashing improbables," he left himself without copy, and could with difficulty fill the spaces. An attack of sunstroke followed, accompanied by stupefaction—a mishap oftener incurred in the strong sun of an Italian winter than in summer. He could not bear light without pain. In the midst of these troubles war seemed imminent, and he feared he should be obliged to draw near England. But again his plans were foiled—probably for the better. In April, 1853, suppressed gout seized him by the head; and, as he cheerfully told a friend, he found himself one morning seated, Turkish fashion, on the carpet—without knowing when, how, or why he had fallen! Bad headaches, which Southey compared to lights in the powder magazine, were not likely to be relieved by heating the boiler, and doing in a few hours what ought to take as many days; and often merely to save postage, by utilising the hand of some friend, who offered to convey

his package to England—but too often forgot to deliver it in time.

The peevishness inseparable from cerebral decay began to show itself at this time, in the incisive criticism of which McGlashan was so capable, and which, when unrestrained by delicacy of feeling, was formidable in its strength. The Scot having enclosed an abusive notice to Lever, he replied that, though not indifferent to public opinion, or indisposed to accept correction, it would be as well to spare him the pain of reading what could not guide nor instruct, since mere condemnation was not criticism; and the notice he enclosed him was simply such, without the trouble of any allusion to those numerous faults which no doubt disfigured the performance. Lever expressed himself sorry for McGlashan's sake, sorrier than for his own, that the story was not better; still more sorry that he had no other *amende* to offer for the disappointment of a neat performance than the expression of his regret and a sincere and honest determination to profit henceforth by the lesson it conveyed. Lever was at first hurt by McGlashan's frankness; but, after a few days, we find him, good-humoured as ever, urging the Scot once more to come and see him at Spezzia, where they would have a jollification together as of old—in those good days when they walked the Coblentz bridge in the moonlight and thought of magnificent things to be mastered.

McGlashan did not go. He was over-worked, and testy from the irritated state of his jaded brain. Again

Lever took his querulousness in good part; assured him that he never remembered in any previous story, where one predominating idea held its place so powerfully before him as in this. Like all he had ever done or ever should do, it was full of faults; but he did not incur these by carelessness; and he urged McGlashan to remember that, if the liquor was getting muddy and near the lees, that he had a good pull at the tap when 'twas better drinking. In transmitting the draught of the finish he remarked that probably he would be no less rejoiced than the author himself, and if he were not hopeless of pleasing him, would ask how he liked it—but perhaps it were better not to provoke a judgment.

Between "Carew" and the "Dodds," not to speak of family troubles, Lever's head, in point of fact, had become pretty well addled. He described the whole as getting infernally complicated, and he feared he should have to publish a key to both books when done; moreover, the equinoctials had begun, and in October, '53, very nearly finished all his family. A smashing levanter half filled their boat, and all but closed "Carew" and the "Dodds," as he told McGlashan, without even a "huddle." The critical publisher had been complaining that Lever often "*huddled*" the catastrophe of his stories. To the "Dodds" we shall again return.

"Sir Jasper" appeared primarily in the magazine. Lever, in reply to hints from McGlashan, told him that the *commencement d'un fin* might be immediately looked for; that there was, then, no room for love, and it would

be a scurvy trick to bring Cupid in only at the end, like a child introduced at the dessert, so he left him out altogether. He was sorely distressed about the choice of two *dénouements* for the tale; he said, like one of Peel's measures, it could be treated in various ways, with divers objections against each. Again, he tried to persuade McGlashan to come to Florence, and over a straw-shirted flask of "Lagrime" to discuss the point. In conclusion, he urged him to take to his bottle—the ink-bottle—and send a receipt in full for a lot of political gossip which he gathered from diplomatists. Time was when McGlashan frequently wrote to him, with much that he liked to hear, and sometimes even more than he relished; but latterly he had become reticent: the old plan, Lever said, was useful to both, and if they could not be as young as they once were, they were at least older friends.

In 1853 Lever received two flattering propositions from America. One was an office if he would reside long enough to qualify for citizenship; the other an editorial chair. But he was too old, he said, to take root in a new soil, and would rather go back to some snug nook in his own land. He wrote to friends in Ireland to know if its prospects were not better, and if a fair opening existed for a weekly journal. He spoke of Lord Normanby, whom he daily saw, as most communicative about Ireland—and especially of his own eventful career as its Viceroy. A very remarkable man, now filling a *rôle* equally high, was on a visit with Lever, in November,

1853. Lever described him as a fine-hearted fellow, worth a million of all the other Bulwers he had seen. Some papers were written by this distinguished guest, which Lever sent over to McGlashan for his magazine. On the 20th December the Duke of Wellington dropped in, and, *sans cérémonie*, remained to dinner. "Now that he is Master of the Horse," said Lever, "I wish he would make me helper in Pimlico!"

Other swell friends, of whom Lever saw a good deal, were Lords Ely and Worcester, Hertford and Farnham. He described the colours of the latter peers as orange, though their sentiments were lemon, with a tinge of Peel. He wrote to McGlashan to know if there was any chance of settling an orange and green garland in United Ireland. We find Sir Philip Crampton the guest of Lever about this time. Thiers and Duvergier dined with Lever on their way to Naples. Thiers spoke with a degree of freedom and openness that led Lever to express the conviction, next day, that he was "fibbing" all the time. Duvergier he described as less agreeable, but more honest. Thiers, in truth, had done his best to amuse; and among other anecdotes, told Lever how the Duc d'Aumale, a few days previously, meeting the French envoy, Bandt, at the Neapolitan Court, was complimented by him on *sa santé excellente*. "Oui, M. le Ministre; c'est comme vous dites," said the Duke, "et au moins, c'est quelque chose que vous ne pouvez pas 'confisquer!'"

Of Scribe and Eugène Sue he saw much at this time, but he described them as wonderfully inferior to what

they produce on paper. Sheil, the British Minister at Florence, was to have dined with him on the very day that his death occurred. Lever spent three hours with him the evening before, and never saw him in finer form.

Among his magazine papers at this period was one on "Diplomatic Relations with Rome," mainly compiled from facts furnished by Sir H. Bulwer, afterwards Lord Dalling, and urging the expediency of establishing a British Embassy there. The paper was prefixed by an editorial apology—stating that the magazine did not necessarily adopt the writer's views. In a private communication Lever mentioned that Lord Dalling's mission had not been a failure in its most important points; but, unluckily, diplomacy required such reserve that defence is always dangerous, and even support was not without peril. Other gossip, not meant for the public ear, freely fell, including the fact that England's foreign policy was entirely dictated by Prince Albert—Lord Aberdeen being the mere reflex of the Court. He describes his government as crumbling away—uncemented by a single principle, and not even banded together by a good prejudice. Disraeli, he said, must turn Radical; "the gentlemen," however, *would* have him, and in some respects he was too good for them! A telling joke introduced by Disraeli, in one of his speeches—that the Tories walked off with the clothes which the Whigs left when bathing—is pronounced by Lever to have had its home in every Vaudeville of the French stage.

The difficulties of Lever's Irish publisher began about this time, and an appeal was made to the staff of the magazine. But the popular novelist, who was at times in much the same predicament, conceived that he owed it to himself not to work under price. He therefore declined to join the minor contributors, who had consented to accept for their papers half the ordinary scale of payment. He should have all or none; and accordingly his name was wholly omitted by the trustees in the list of liabilities contracted by the publisher. It appearing likely that the magazine would soon be in the market, they seem to have made an effort—though hardly an ingenuous one—to exhibit it to intending purchasers in as little encumbered a state as possible. Lever was criticised by some for his attitude on this occasion; but surely the *esprit de corps* he evinced indicated a less mercenary spirit than if, on the principle of half a loaf being better than no bread, he grasped at a mutilated stipend.

Meanwhile the three most popular novelists of the day, clad in pink, green, and yellow, continued with spirit the race for public favour. "O'Malley" and "Con Cregan" in their pink wrappers reminded one of the flush of health and manly excitement; while Dickens in his green garb, and Thackeray in his yellow, presented pleasant contrasts. Critics there were who fancied they detected a significance in the hues with which these names came to be associated. They were held to be indicative of Lever's warmth and buoyancy; the in-

exhaustible freshness of Dickens; and the somewhat bilious and less healthy productions of the more saturnine Titmarsh. Lever was fastidious in regard to the designs of Phiz on his monthly wrappers, and said that there was a great deal in the externals of a book as well as in a gentleman.

Dickens, wishing to infuse some new blood into the serial with which his name is linked, asked Lever to give him something lively for it. "A Day's Ride, a Life Romance," was accordingly sent. Mr. Chambers had complained that Lever's fault was mistaking animal spirits for wit. This performance displayed less humour and more irony than his previous books; and just as Thackeray meant "Barry Lindon" as the autobiography of a knave, Lever's design in this book was to record the life of a fool. "The Day's Ride," however, proved a fatiguing failure, and Lever was long sore from the effects of it. Dickens complained that it had the effect of depressing the circulation of *All the Year Round;* and at last resorted to the unusual step of advertising the day on which the prolonged "Ride" was to end. Elsewhere a coolness between Dickens and Lever, happily removed at last, has been noticed. Dickens admitted that a few good glimpses of men and scenes were obtained, no doubt, along this tedious "Ride;" among others, of Algernon Sydney Potts, the predestinarian and quondam apothecary, whose ride through Wicklow, and subsequent adventures in Austria, are not without excitement, and led a Yankee critic to say that, "Lever letting off a

good deal of Bohemia, is at his best in the wild vagaries of this reckless day-dreamer." *

Lever's life has been written to little purpose if the reader has not long since discovered that thrift formed no part of his system. He used to say that it was like a taste for drawing or an ear for music; there were people whom no amount of teaching would enable to draw a pig or play "Patrick's Day," and to harangue some persons on economy is like arguing with a deaf man to dance in time, or to urge the blind to observe the laws of perspective. In 1865 he refers to some of the homilies which friendly advisers addressed to him at Florence, and previously at Templeogue, on the necessity of thrift. But as there is nothing so uncommon as common-sense, he failed to profit much by this counsel.

"A great man, who was gracious enough to take an interest in me, tendered me some very excellent advice on the score of my extravagant mode of life. He pointed out to me how I kept too many horses, gave too many dinners, played high points at whist; and in general indulged in habits totally unsuited to any but men of large means. He brought the matter so home to me by a reference to himself and his own expenditure—he being, as I have said, a 'Personage'—that I could not but feel the application. I pondered over all he said, particularly one point, on which he laid much stress. 'Begin your reformation by small economies. You have no idea how insensibly the desire to extend them will

* The *New York World*, No. 152.

grow on you. Start with something you can do very well without, and you will be astonished to find how many things you now regard as necessaries will drop into that category.'"

It was not so easy to find that which he could so well dispense with; he liked so many things, and found them all so pleasant. At last he hit upon one. He tells us that a pastime with him had been pistol-practice in a gallery, and that he began his retrenchment by cutting off the daily franc he gave a poor man who used to hold his pony at the door. And henceforth he fastened the bridle to the hook of the window-shutters, or outside "jalousies." The poor man's look of dismay went to his heart; but Lever's great friend had told him to prepare for sacrifices. Like one proud of a victory over himself, he stepped boldly on. Was it the consciousness of having done something great in self-denial that steadied his eye and nerved his hand. His first shot struck the very centre, and itself proclaimed the victory by ringing a bell attached to the back of the target, but so uprariously, that his pony, startled by the din, broke away, carrying with him the window frame; "and all together," wrote Lever, "the repairs amounting to eighty-seven francs, and more ridicule than I am able to set down. This was my first and last attempt at economy."

The moral which he drew from this and more was that "a life passed in incessant savings and self-denials seems to me as logical a mistake as though a man should persist throughout his whole existence in training for a match

that was never to come off. I see a good deal of privation in this, and I cannot see the profit." Soon after his son and heir died, which further smoothed if it wholly failed to justify his philosophy.

Who was the personage to whom he mysteriously refers as his adviser? An early friend of Lever's, and who was much with him at Florence at this time, says that Thackeray had previously impressed upon him the necessity of thrift, and that during his intercourse with Lever there he is believed to have renewed the friendly counsel; but Thackeray, in these inculcations, had merely echoed advice given over and over by the Rev. John Lever. "Thackeray had a sincere regard for Charles," adds the Major, "and would say anything to him;" and he goes on to supply reminiscences of both, which for chronological sequence must needs be reserved.

Despite his disregard of thrift he was, for an author of his fame, singularly moderate in demands on the bounty of publishers. Dickens received for "Silverman's Explanation" and "Holiday Romance"—the work of a few days—and containing about fifteen pages, one thousand pounds! Lever's mistake was that he at all times asked too little.

Thackeray envied Lever's life in Florence, which he pronounced the essence of luxury. One day the cholera came, dealt death around, let panic loose, and draped the streets in mourning. This terrible visitation marked the year 1854. But it is an ill wind that blows no good—the sanitary state of Florence has evidently been on the

mend—very much owing to the prohibition of intramural burials: its population having for centuries found their last resting place in the crypts and cloisters of the crowded city. Among those who sleep in Florence is the authoress of "Aurora Leigh."

Lever was now in the zenith of his fame and at no period more prolific. Unless to guard against the reproach of "writing himself out"—one freely preferred at this time by the critics of Dickens—it is difficult to know why he brought out "Maurice Tierney" and some other tales anonymously. The final result of his experience was against anonymous publication,—notwithstanding that the success of the Waverley Novels is said to have been largely due to the circumstance of a great unknown inditing them, and that Junius would never have attained his imperishable rank had his vizor been unlocked.

"I have never been able to understand," he said, "how people have courage to go in mask to a ball and endure all the impertinences to which the disguise exposes them. Surely there is no throwing off one's identity by the mere assumption of a domino; and what terrible stabs to one's self-esteem may be given under the cope of a monk or the cowl of a Capuchin! The next thing to this is to publish anonymously—to give to the world a poem or a novel, and lie perdu while your friends read, ridicule, or revile it—to sit calmly, smilingly by, when some one reads you aloud to a laughing audience, overwhelmed with your absurdity, to be warned

against your own book, to be confidentially told, 'It's the very worst thing of the season;' to hear little fragments of yourself banded about as domestic drolleries, and to listen to curious speculations as to how or why the publisher had ever adventured on such a production, and grave questions put if there be really a public for such trash."

In 1853 Lever is found living in a quiet cottage called Marola, on the Gulf of Spezzia. Here he wrote the "Dodd Family," which he often said had the fortune to be better liked by his friends and less valued by the public than any other of his books. This book, in which the adventures of a family filled with preposterously false ideas regarding the manners and customs of the countries they visit are humorously described, was published by Mr. Chapman in 1854. Lever, offering to McGlashan, a short time previously, "Sir Jasper Carew," says that the idea of a series of letters which he projected would hamper so seriously the development of the story, that, on consideration, he was obliged to relinquish it. The difficulty from which he shrank in 1852 he now mastered. The story of the Dodds, like that of "Guy Mannering," is conducted by the letters of the chief actors themselves; who, with great skill, "are thus made the unconscious exponents of their own characters, follies, and foibles, as well as the historians of their own fates. Perhaps the most conspicuous merit in the story is, that each character is so contrived as to evoke, in the most humorous form, the peculiarities of all the others, without any violation of the individuality assigned to itself."

The man who led the van of this invading party is sketched under the name of Kenny J. Dodd. Lever describes an accidental meeting with a gentleman of this genus; how he formed an acquaintance with him which gradually ripened into intimacy. That amongst the many topics of conversation between them, the Continent and its habits occupied a very wide space. Dodd had lived little abroad; Lever had passed half of a life there. Their views and judgments were not alike; and if novelty had occasionally misled one, time and habit had not less powerfully blunted the perceptions of the other. The old resident discovered, to his astonishment, that the very opinions which he smiled at from his friend, had been once his own; that he had himself incurred some of the mistakes and fallen into many of the blunders which he now ridiculed, and that, so far from the Dodd family being the exception, they were in reality no very unfair samples of a large class of our travelling countrymen. They had come abroad with crude and absurd notions of what awaited them on the Continent. They dreamed of economy, refinement, universal politeness, and a profound esteem for England from all foreigners. They fancied that the advantages of foreign travel were to be obtained without cost or labour; that locomotion could educate, sight-seeing cultivate them; that in the capacity of British subjects every society should be open to them, and that, in fact, it was enough to emerge from home obscurity to become at once recognised in the fashionable circles of any continental city.

"They not only entertained all these notions, but they held them in defiance of most contradictory elements. They practised the most rigid economy when professing immense wealth; they affected to despise the foreigner while shunning their own countrymen; they assumed to be votaries of art when merely running over galleries; frequently outraged all the proprieties of foreign life by an open and shameless profligacy. It is very hard to believe that a few parallels of latitude can affect the moral thermometer, but so it is, and so Mr. Dodd honestly confessed he found it. He not only avowed that he could do abroad what he dare not do at home, but that, worse still, the infraction cost no sacrifice of self-esteem, nor self-reproach. It was not that these derelictions were part of the habits of foreign life, or at least of such of it as met the eye; it was in reality, because he had come abroad with his own preconceived ideas of a certain latitude in morals, and was resolved to have the benefit of it. Such inconsistency in theory led, naturally, to absurdity in action; and John Bull became in consequence a mark for every trait of eccentricity that satirists could describe, or caricaturists paint.

"The gradations of rank so rigidly defined in England, are less accurately marked out abroad. Society, like the face of the soil, is not enclosed by boundaries and fenced by hedgerows; but stretches away in boundless undulations of unlimited extent. The Englishman fancies there are no boundaries, because he does not see the landmarks. Since all seems open, he imagines there can be no tres-

pass. This is a serious mistake! Not less a one is to connect title with rank. He fancies that nobility represents abroad the same pretensions which it maintains in England, and indignantly revenges his own blunder by calumniating in common every foreigner of rank."

Pithy and pointed dialogue make up the strength of this book. It was well remarked of Lever's novels that, "No laborious building of a story, no seeing to the hinges, no oiling of the cranks, made the mechanism of his books intrusive in days when public taste would have condemned the artifices which pass for art in ours." Lever told his friend the Major in 1869, that he had never done anything to equal the Dodds. To another friend he said, during his last visit to Dublin that Kate Dodd was the favourite girl of his creation; he considered her the type of a true Irishwoman. She is called after his wife; and it cannot be doubted, that engrafted on the character are features and qualities which had served to endear to him the woman who had made the happiness of a long life.

This book written on the plan of "Humphrey Clinker" is perhaps, one of his best. There is a great similarity between Smollett and Lever. It rarely happens that the men who write prescriptions also write novels; but Smollett like Lever had combined the parts of physician and comic novelist. The tone of both is tinged by Tory tendencies. Smollett and Lever put their own adventures in books. Smollett introduced Dr. Akenside into "Peregrine Pickle" as Dr. Smellfungus. Lever puts

Dr. Cusack into "O'Malley," and Dr. Finucane in "Lorrequer." Both started Tory journals in support of the Government; and both papers survived not many weeks; both wrote with ease and eschewed revision; both had a military bias; and martial scenes and rollicking adventure, with a relish of practical jokes, equally constitute their characteristics.*

In defence of this habit of non-revision, Lever told in a suppressed preface to the edition of "Lorrequer" issued in 1861, the story of "a painter who, having failed in many efforts to give the precise effect to the blood-stained foam on the mouth of a war-horse, in a moment of passionate fury hurled his sponge, stained and dyed with many a hue, at the canvas, and, to his delight, discovered that he had hit upon the very blended tints he wanted. The application of this tale to myself, restrains me now in the revision, and I am not without the strong suspicion that in the correction of its faults, I might be not improbably impairing the very character which first attracted favour towards it."

In May, 1854, he communicated his fears that he should not be able to carry out his Yankee trip for want of money, but would, at all events, "do Dublin." Lord Eliot, the Irish secretary of his former eulogy, and who

* That Lever shrank from revision we have ample proof. In "Jack Hinton," 1st Ed. p. 256, and repeated in all later ones, we read that "the priest in the corner was tumbling over some books to conceal his sense of defeat." "Thumbing," we are sure, was the word originally written. Several slight errors pointed out by Maginn and other critics remain in the reprints, unaltered. Some of them are trivial enough—such as speaking of Cork whiskey as "Beamish." Beamish brews only.

expressed himself sensible of it, had now succeeded to the high post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and Lever's object in leaving Florence for Dublin at this time, was to see if Lord St. Germans had aught to offer—from a Mastership of the Horse to the office of Court Jester. On Lord Aberdeen's Government, however, Lever had not much claim; and he received nothing better than a dinner or two at the Viceregal Lodge.

At 8 o'clock A.M., August 2, 1854, Lever sends McGlashan word that he will join him at breakfast that day. A week later, he is found at Tanderagee, sketching the heads of "a coorse" of work suggested by his publishers. Messrs. Chapman and Hall urged the reissue of his novels in the form adopted by Dickens. This, with new introductions, Lectures for America, and papers for a magazine, led him to say that he was working with the zeal of an apostle, and the sweat of a galley slave. He presented the skeleton, but had not the vaguest idea where the flesh was to come from. The habit of procrastination, he said, was "a bloody thief." He sketched a long list of work to do, including the cutting of his throat, if he could manage five minutes spare time to do it. Printers' proofs plagued him throughout his progress, and he pleasantly complained that his eyes were not so good for print as for the pretty girls of Dublin. One man he met whom he declared it was good for sore eyes to see. Michael Joseph Barry, author of the "Kishoge Papers," and one of Lever's editorial staff when at Templeogue, found his hand

grasped heartily as of old. "He urged me much," writes Mr. Barry, "to go to Florence and take up literature as a pursuit, asking me to stay with him while I was unsettled. He told me then a good deal of his life there; said his house was always the great resort after the theatres, and I would see there everyone worth seeing in Italy. 'I live,' he said, 'for about £1200 a year, but I could not live as I do in London for £3000 —nor in Ireland at any outlay. People call me extravagant, and in a sense I am, no doubt; but this life is to me not merely a luxury but a necessity. It feeds my lamp, which would die out otherwise. My receptions are my studies. I find there my characters, and pick up a thousand things that are to me invaluable. You can't keep drawing the wine off the cask perpetually, and putting nothing in; and this is my way of replenishing my brain when I have exhausted it.'" *

The popular Ulster King-at-Arms, whom Ireland owes thanks to Lord St. Germans for bringing from the sister country to the home of his fathers, sat opposite to Lever at dinner at the Viceregal Lodge at this time. Nobody seemed to mind him, and it was clear that the society, not being literary, failed to appreciate his presence. The best table-talker of his time remained silent; and Sir Bernard was not much surprised to find, in a subsequent novel, a not over laudatory description of "a dinner in the Viceregal Lodge," which mentioned that "of course" the Ulster King was present, and sat opposite

* Letter from M. J. Barry, Esq., Heidelberg, March 18, 1879.

to the hero of the tale then in hand. Seventeen years after, during the Viceroyalty of Lord Spencer, Sir Bernard Burke was much amused at finding himself once more seated opposite Lever at dinner, not only in the same room but in the same part of it. They had not, we believe, been formally introduced; and, during the earlier courses, Sir Bernard's conversation was mainly addressed to the lady whom he had brought in to dinner. "I am just thinking," the pleasant King-at-Arms said at last, but without alluding to the printed description, "that you and I sat in precisely the same positions seventeen years since!" "And I have been engaged in precisely the same thought," rejoined Lever, breaking into a joyous laugh. Like a mine exploded by a spark, his store of anecdotes was at once let loose, which continued uninterruptedly for the rest of the evening, and which, Lord Spencer addressing the present writer says, "greatly charmed and delighted us all." Lever, on that occasion, remained for three days the guest of Lord Spencer.

But his impressions of the Viceregal Court of Lord St. Germans in 1854, were not so pleasant. At one of these dinners, he decried the notion of a speedy capture of Sebastopol; and incurred, as he said, as much ridicule as was consistent with Viceregal politeness to bestow and the small wit of small A.D.C.'s to inflict. He drops stinging satires on different dragoons with whom he came in contact; but the record of it must give place to a tragic episode which waits and wails.

Can we wonder that he who may be styled the son

and representative of "Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon," should himself have run such a dashing career in a dragoon regiment that difficulties at last caught him and heavily involved Lever?

"After he had left the Royal School at Armagh," writes a friend of Lever's, "he entered the army, went to India, drew heavily on his father, and plunged him into debt, upsetting his financial arrangements, and leading him to make sacrifices of his novels." Lever had been ignorant of the cost attending the life of a subaltern in India. "I first saw him," writes another, "at Lucknow in 1858. He was then a cornet in the Bays or 2nd Dragoon Guards, having joined the regiment on August the 17th, 1857." "I only knew little Charlie as a boy," observes one who has still earlier recollections. "He was like his mother in face, hair, and complexion; was a very good chess-player, even at the age of eight. As an only son he had been, naturally enough, petted. Though at no time a diligent student, he could, when he liked, exhibit proofs of a retentive memory." A friend, one day visiting at Lever's house, astonished him by repeating the Thirty-nine Articles as framed in the year 1562. "Hollo Charlie," he exclaimed, addressing his son, "this five-pound note shall be yours, if you commit them with equal accuracy, to memory." The task was mastered and the premium won. Lever's efforts during Charley's boyhood, disclose laudable anxiety to provide his future with definite employment. He urges McGlashan to see if he could make a publisher of him,

and describes him (September, 1852) as thoroughly straightforward and honourable, and utterly incapable of a mean act. He at last binds him to a civil engineer, but the bias of the boy lay in another line. Lever thought often and with pain of the precipice to which that bias might lead.

"There is nothing," he said, "in a single man's life so heavy to be borne as the cares of a family, and the future of children! I am, as you know, neither faint-hearted nor easily depressed, and yet there are moments when my courage fails me, and I feel that there is nothing of mere personal calamity could have that effect."

Unlike Sir Walter Scott's son, who when quartered at Dublin boasted that he had never read his father's novels, the greatest pleasure of Charley's youth was to read those exciting stories of military life as shown in the careers of "O'Malley" and "Hinton." And when he became a man he longed to do likewise, by emulating in a Dragoon Regiment their feats and fun. How little Lever dreamt when writing the laughable exploits of "Lorrequer" and his successors, that he was sowing on his own hearth the seeds of future mischief.*

* The day had gone by for hard drinking, wrenching off knockers, beating watchmen, calling out fire-engines on a false alarm, breaking lamps, and fighting duels; but readers are gradually led to like such details, and at last we take by the arm our rollicking companion; for, just as Dodd and other characters improve us by their wisdom, Lorrequer is bad company in one sense while good company in another; his merry, musical laugh is infectious. "We first endure" and "then embrace;" becoming, as it were, an accomplice in his practical jokes. But no poison lurks in such details. A critic has freed Lever from reproach in words which claim more enduring record:—"Whatever of fast life he pourtrayed is refined and

"Jack Hinton" administers personal chastisement to Ulick Burke; Charley used the *argumentum baculinum* too. When riding with his father one day at Baden, a peasant rudely crossed their path, driving a dray and accompanying the act with an oath and a sneer. Charley, then aged fourteen only, sprang from his saddle, seized the whip from the peasant's hand, and belaboured him soundly. The elder Lever was not displeased by this display of spirit: he threw the rustic a few florins to allay his pain; and both rode off rather proud of the achievement.

"You ask for details and characteristics of Cornet Lever, late 2nd Dragoon Guards," writes Major O'Beirne, M.P., "I was well acquainted with him, as we served in the same regiment in India from 1858 until 1862. I could, of course, give you some anecdotes and incidents

purified by the artist himself. The air is cleared of the poison; the sting is taken from the flower. In the devilry of Lever's scenes there may be much that is contagious; there is nothing that is noxious. It is a very exceptional thing for him to touch at all upon topics of a doubtful character; but when he does—witness his novel of "Sir Brooke Fosbrooke"—how palpable, how intense, how unmitigated is his scorn for baseness, cowardice, vice. In all these matters Lever's strong sense of manly rectitude is apparent. There is no doubt on which side are his sympathies. He does not, as is the fashion with the 'fleshly school' palter with iniquity, and while denouncing sin in the abstract revel in the highly-coloured passages that to the youthful mind are the most fatal provocatives to sin in the concrete. As for his heroes, who does not know the infinite series of escapades and scrapes through which he conducts them? They are in difficulty often, sometimes they are in debt. They are always open to fun; but the fun is pure and wholesome. As for the debt, it is disposed of by some comfortable windfall; the difficulties are honourably surmounted."

Unhappily, however, for father and son, difficulties were not mastered with such ease in reality.

of his rather wild career in the regiment, which I am sure would add to the interest and amusement of your work; but I am not at liberty, life in a regiment being held as sacred as that in a private family. Perhaps it will be sufficient for your purpose to know that the late Cornet Lever was in every respect the fac-simile of Charles O'Malley; as daring and reckless, and ever thinking of executing the most surprising feats of horsemanship, billiard playing, pistol shooting, &c., &c., &c. In fact he was the most accomplished man I have ever heard or read of; not only in such gifts as would make him conspicuous in a regiment, but he was likewise an accomplished linguist, and possessed a vast knowledge of general literature. Unfortunately he was in constant difficulties as regards money-matters."

Lever with ingenious philosophy tried to bear up against these bitter blasts. A life without duns, he would say, is like a sky without a cloud, most agreeable for a short time, but soon becoming wearisome from very monotony. One grows as tired of uninterrupted blue as of impending rain and storm. The landscape effect of light and shadow over existence had excellent uses!

"Young Lever served in the troop I commanded," writes an officer filling high official status, "and so probably I knew as much about him as anybody. He was a warm-hearted, generous fellow, but given too much to convivial and extravagant habits. Apparently he had set before himself, as an ideal of what a cavalry soldier should be, the bygone age described in his father's novels in

the character of Jack Hinton, and was often in trouble in consequence. You ask me, if he fought a duel. Some absurdity did take place in his own bungalow with a great friend of his, such as firing a pistol at one another, 'taking care to miss.' Had it been anything more than this, the regimental authorities would have at once taken notice of it. In fact nobody but one or two of his friends ever heard of this absurd boyish joke. He was a good rider, and of good natural abilities; and had he been more ascetically brought up, would probably have turned out a gallant soldier. Personally I liked him, for I found him warm-hearted and very amenable to myself as his captain."

"He served under my command for two or three years," writes the highest authority, General Seymour. "He was a particularly intelligent and smart young officer, and saw service in the regiment in the campaign in India of 1858–59, consequent on the mutinies in Oude. He subsequently sold out, and died at Florence." For service he received a medal; but the sequel is sad enough. Major Lukin happened to be in Italy; and, entering a morgue one day without any particular object, was horrified to recognise his late brother officer among the dead. On inquiry, he learned that young Lever had been found dead in his bed (dressed in evening clothes) at one of the hotels; and, having no friends that the hotel people knew, his remains were removed to the morgue. It is added, that he presented, when in the regiment and afterwards, a very apoplectic appearance.

His debts had been paid, and the blow fell the heavier

from the fact that a promised Colonial appointment for him was daily expected. With conflicting emotions Lever felt that Charley was less his father's son than the son of his genius; and that "he was own brother to 'Lorrequer,' 'O'Malley,' and 'Tom Burke.'"

Lever bore up against his trials with the indomitable elasticity of his nature. "The theory of animal heat," he said, "has established the fact that the individual who has absorbed a certain amount of caloric will be able to resist cold longer and better than he who goes into the air without such a provision. May there not be something of the same kind in our moral chemistry, and that a stock of latent happiness will serve to ward off the chill approach of adversity long after exposure to its assault; and that the heart which has drunk freely of bliss, will carry the flame even after sorrow and suffering have impaired the sense and dulled the enjoyment?" In the Val d'Arno at Florence, which he called the happy valley, and in the creations of his own fancy, Lever gradually forgot past worries. He said that, as in certain climates rocks become shrined by lichens, so bygones become rapidly shadowed here.

Lever's love of display often led people to snub him; and his brusqueness sometimes brought him with strangers into situations the reverse of pleasant. He had always been most sensitive, as his letters shew: more than once we find him wincing under the anonymous criticism of some provincial print. They who knew him best assure us that, when his vanity was

wounded, he did not hesitate to resent rebuffs; so much so that at Florence, when people shewed any rudeness to him or to his family, "he used," writes Major D——, "to put an unmistakable caricature of them into whatever book he was writing; and then, when the number arrived at Florence, would go down to the club and avow his design. It would not be true to say that he was vindictive; but he did delight in giving a side-thrust to casual persons who annoyed him, after which he forgot them. People saw and condemned these little defects, but his really intimate friends well knew how good, noble, and true-hearted he was." He was, indeed, always ready to accept the outstretched hands of men with whom he may have had some disagreement. One case is specially before us, where he begged to assure a person who seemed not unwilling to be reconciled, that "a hearty shake of the hand awaited him, and as good a flask of Hermitage Rouge as ever moistened his labials!"

He seemed to know what people would be saying of him, and in "O'Dowd" bitterly says:— "We certainly do seize upon any disparaging element in a great character with an avidity akin to that we display in unmasking a rogue and exposing an impostor." Though always believing that Fate had ill-treated him, he was yet convinced, as he himself prettily expressed it, that "his geese were not merely swans, but infinitely prettier, more white, more stately, and more graceful than his neighbour's swans." But he complained that men were con-

stantly dropping hard, stern judgments that they stupidly called "truths;" "and there are creatures ready to give their vulgar opinions at every moment, and tell you scores of things that push your patience to its last entrenchment." He then notices a trick with those who cannot find in some private chamber a skeleton to drag forth and rattle. "Let one of these fellows into your grounds, and they'll pluck your swan's feathers to such a purpose, that, though they won't persuade you he was a goose, they'll give him a horrible resemblance to one."

It soon became clear to the Florentines, or rather to their visitors, that Burns' lines, "A chiel's amang ye takin' notes," came home very closely to them; and this circumstance tended to limit the extent of Lever's social intercourse there. He was so prolific as a story-teller, and the machinery for producing it rolled and rattled so unflaggingly, that a constant crave for fuel became at last a necessity. The incidents and anecdotes of every night were utilised. All he heard was seized. One lady from Clare, who happened to tell him at Florence a little tale which occurred within her own knowledge, was surprised to find it in a subsequent book; and a hundred similar instances might be given. They who care to learn more of his style of life at Florence should read "The Dodds," "The Daltons," "The Martins," "One of Them," and "The Fortunes of Glencore." Severe portraits of people well known, not only in Florence but in Dublin, peep from these books —especially that of a lady given to forcing her acquain-

tance on certain folk,—one who, it was whispered, would even "faint" at their door, for the sake of being carried into the coveted enclosure.

Throughout the progress of "The Dodds," Lever almost for the first time in his career, contemned cavils, and held on his career boldly. Once in this, as in a previous book, he had some thoughts of seeking to justify himself before the public, for certain things which a captious paragraphist had condemned; but he decided on remaining mute, lest by his defence against manslaughter a new indictment for murder should be framed; critics had less often taken him up when tripping, than when he stood, with port erect, on good and firm ground.

It was at this time that invitations to enter Parliament began to beckon. "Lever's friends set their faces against the project," writes Mr. Innes, "though of his successfully addressing the House they felt no doubt; but he had never made a political speech; on constitutional history or government by party,—of the rules of the House, &c., &c., he was ignorant, and time would be required to learn them, and, meantime, what was to become of his work by which he lived; and then he was no longer young. There was also the warning furnished by Sheridan's career. He had wit, eloquence, an early start, and an opportunity such as few men ever enjoyed, and yet from social snares, and lack of business capacity, where did it all end? The public lost trust in him, though at one time in no man was confidence higher. He lost confidence in himself, and died—we all know how he died."

CHAPTER VII.

"The Fortunes of Glencore"—Startling change observed in Lever's style—Wreck of a Mentor's mind—Spezzia—Death of McGlashan—Lever wishes to return to Ireland—"The Martins of Cro-Martin"—Appointed Vice-Consul at Spezzia—"The Daltons"—"Sir Jasper Carew"—Major D——'s recollections resumed—Objections to the three-volume novel—Comical speeches.

GRATTAN said that an oak of the forest was too old to be transplanted at fifty, alluding to the difficulties of change from the Irish to the English Senate. Lever proved that at fifty he was not too old to change the *venue* of his novels, and deliberately to begin a fresh start. Grattan's sun set with the Union. Lever dated his real outburst of mind from the hour he had passed his zenith. He was half a century old when in sobriety of thought he applied himself to the task of realising an ideal which the author of "Lorrequer" or "O'Malley" would be thought the last to dream. "The Fortunes of Glencore" broke to the world this startling change. They who had roared over the fun of "O'Malley" were dismayed to find that nothing more could be hoped for in that vein; and with more groan than grin they hailed every book which followed in the wake of "Glencore." Lever, by this stroke, cut for ever his early worshippers, and appealed to the judgment of a tribunal as different from

the first as is a racket-court from a court of Equity. Large as was the popularity which "O'Malley" reaped, Lever could never well understand how it so triumphantly achieved it. On the 11th May, 1841, he wrote to McGlashan to say that he looked upon the whole thing as very inferior, and if not sanctioned by success would not readily forgive himself for writing it—in fact he hoped to live and do much better, for hitherto he had disappointed himself, not in the amount of praise he had met with, but in his own estimation. This, he added, was modesty or assurance, as McGlashan liked to take it.

The style of his early novels was an acquired art, taught by the contagious companionship of Maxwell, fostered by an observant study of his mind, and recommended by McGlashan who found it pay well. All the while Lever was writing in the style of "O'Malley," a voice perpetually whispered that such, after all, was not his real vocation; and that an ideal, shadowed forth in early dreams, had yet to be realised. So long as Maxwell lived, he ran the race with him. That popular writer died in 1850, and we find Lever soon after shifting his ground. The change was sudden, and startling. Lever felt, or fancied, that he had, at last, found the true vein in the mine of his brain; but it is not clear to us that the very novels on which he hardly cared to stake his reputation are not those which, after all, will enjoy the really enduring fame, and be read and thumbed when the more thoughtful ones are forgotten. "Glencore," which he put forth as his leading sample of the good

store coming, is weak in plot, though indicative of genius in analysing character and in disentangling the web of human motives. Correspondence, sometimes newspaper paragraphs, and in one instance "a leader," were the vehicles which he mainly employed to conduct his story. But on the whole, he regarded "Glencore" as a trump card, which he led forth boldly, and with the air of a man who felt that he had the game in his hands.

It was said by one of the ablest of Lever's critics that there is nothing in the history of literature to correspond with this sudden and complete change in his style. The case of Lord Lytton, however, partly supplies a parallel. What can be more unlike "Pelham" or even "Paul Clifford," than "Rienzi," or "The Last Days of Pompeii"? When Bulwer began with his "Adventures of a Gentleman," displaying fun as broad as Smollett and wit as bright as that of Fielding, it does not follow that his succeeding novels should be conceived in the same strain. A bright train of books dropped from Bulwer one by one until, in the "Caxtons," he again turned over a new leaf, and almost cut the connection with the previous series.

In changing his style, Lever shewed, at all events, rare courage. As master of the "Lorrequer" school he stood unrivalled. In "Glencore" one day he broke new ground, and henceforth his bright ploughshare turned up fresh strata in a field wherein sundry competitors, in the prime of power, strove. Lever wrote to McGlashan, telling him of this new tale to which he had

given much forethought. He did not know when he took to a new story with the same gusto and felt as if he wanted to write it.

Introducing "Glencore" to the world, he wrote:—

"If I have never disguised from myself the grounds of any humble success I have attained to as a writer of fiction; if I have always had before me the fact that to movement and action, the stir of incident, and a certain lightheartedness and gaiety of temperament, more easy to impart to others than to repress in oneself, I have owed much if not all of whatever popularity I have enjoyed;—I have yet felt that it would be in the delineation of very different scenes and the portraiture of very different emotions that I should reap what I would reckon as a real success. . . . . Years have imparted, and time has but confirmed me in the notion, that any skill I possess, lies in the detection of character and the unravelment of that tangled skein which makes up human motives."

Lever, as he got older, had less of Lorrequer, and more of Kenny Dodd in his nature; and he probably showed judgment in cutting the former. Lorrequer, it will be remembered, was a practical joker whose invariable success makes us laugh while we enjoy his companionship, but we never pity the fate of his victims; and this, perhaps, is the chief danger of familiarity with such stories. It has been observed with pith and pleasantry, by "Blackwood"—

"When a clown trips up a baker in the street, wheels him off in his own barrow, trundles him into his own

oven, and there bakes him alive, the fate of the baker excites no pity, and the inhumanity of his persecutor no indignation. And when Lorrequer gratuitously details to a perfectly inoffensive stranger an elaborate falsehood, and afterwards shoots the man he has insulted, without the least consciousness of any reason why he should fight him at all, we laugh at the drollery of the misdeed described, without for a moment attributing either to ourselves or the author any participation in the immorality of the conduct which causes our merriment."

The laughter is good for us, though the example may be questionable. We like our companions; and love these early etchings of heroes with long legs and trousers tightly strapped over the neatest of Wellington boots, and whose life is full of "go." But the "falls"—what wonderful falls these buoyant beings get! Englishmen supposed that the sculls of Irish dragoons were as thick as the head of a fossil Elk—one of those antlered ornaments which adorn the halls of the Irish gentry—and as strong, too, for no amount of punch drank overnight is ever found followed by headache.

Let us hope, however, that it is in the book only we like such society: out of it, we should hardly care to know Mr. Lorrequer, or even Captain O'Malley, while in those novels marked by ripeness, sobriety, and incisive observation of men and things—we venerate the Knight of Gwynne, and respect Kenny Dodd.

Perhaps one is disposed to view with increased interest his earlier heroes, on re-acquaintance after a long

alienation, because they are of a race well-nigh extinct. The Encumbered Estates Bill has cleared the land of some of the best of such rollicking spendthrifts and dare-devils; and competitive examination has weeded the service of much that formerly flourished in rank luxuriance. The subaltern whom we meet now-a-days at dances, drums, and drawing-rooms, is of a wholly different type—men to whom we feel a greater confidence in introducing the wives and daughters of Erin. He has less padding and inflation than of yore, more ballast and less push. With *épaulettes*, have been relinquished other attributes equally brilliant but equally useless, if not equally objectionable. Their white belts, faced with brass and stiff with pipeclay, have been laid aside with habits, not very stiff certainly, but which include white lies and whiter cheeks, the penalty of their dashing life; and no longer we hear them singing uproariously under sometimes too palpable influences—

> "Oh love is the soul of an Irish dragoon,
> In battle, in bivouac, or in saloon,
> From the tip of his spur to his bright sabretache.
> With his soldierly gait and his bearing so high,
> His gay laughing look, and his bright speaking eye,
> He frowns at his rival, he ogles his wench,
> He springs in his saddle and *chasses* the French—
> With his jingling spur and his bright sabretache."

Opinions will differ as to the good breeding displayed in saloons of frowning on some and ogling others, however much we may admire dragoons springing in their saddles in pursuit of the foe.

The earlier novels to which McGlashan stood sponsor are pervaded by an aroma of hot punch. Lever's fellow-students and colleagues of the Burschen Club describe him as most temperate. To what influence, therefore, may we trace the rollicking tone of "Lorrequer," "O'Malley," "Hinton," and "Burke"—a tone relinquished from the day that an English publisher took him under his wing. For years McGlashan had been Lever's mentor from number to number of every story. And the pleasant Scot was exactly the man to illustrate and enjoy the jolly habits of these heroes, of whom he was quite as much the father as Lever himself.

Mr. Mason and others, who had been McGlashan's school-fellows at Edinburgh and his boon companions in after life, while bearing evidence to his worth and wisdom, tell great anecdotes of his powers as a punch drinker. Give McGlashan good Islay and tell him a good story, and he remained quite absorbed in the enjoyment. It happened one night at Mr. Mason's house that, under these influences, as he sat before a strong fire, he continued quite unconscious of the literal roasting his legs were undergoing; though keenly alive next day to the surgical treatment then, and long after, necessary. Poor McGlashan's mind was usually so overburthened with the cares of business that, overnight, he sought to forget them; and when sipping his wine would sometimes be heard muttering, "£200 on to-morrow; £300 on Wednesday, £85 on Thursday," and so on—in reference to the bills then coming due.

Lever, in impressing on him the necessity of prudence, told a story which he had heard from Lord G. Seymour who, in arraigning an old butler for intemperance, the man, not sober, hiccoughed and said, "I never took anything to hurt my constitution." It was overwork, rather than the use of stimulants, of which Lever warned the old publisher. He reminded him that, all his life through, he had done the actual labour of half-a-dozen good heads *per diem*. It was more than time to give himself fair play, and enjoy a long life with all the fruits of his honourable industry around him. Modesty, the handmaid of genius, peeped forth prettily in this advice to McGlashan. He added that this was not all disinterested counsel. To McGlashan he looked for advice and aid in many a future project. Often had Lever told him that he was the only man that ever really understood either what he could do, or how he ought to do it. Once more he urged him to come to Florence, where a gossip of a still night over the Arno would refresh him more than solitary rambling. But McGlashan rejected the final counsel; and made a melancholy tour, alone, from inn to inn; which led Lever to say that of all poor fun there is nothing poorer than being obliged to do host and say welcome to oneself.

"Glencore" was hailed by the more demure of the professional critics as a step in the right direction, exhibiting a difference between the earlier books and it as wide as that between a Tipperary row and a

feudal tournament; but that if they were called upon to decide on the author's claim to a permanent reputation they should not regard "Glencore" as his highest testimonial. Billy Traynor, and the lady diplomatist were careful studies: Lever *v.* Leiven had all the attraction of diamond cut diamond, the princess of that name having been incisively sketched by him as a political *intriguante*.

His early admirers resisted the change. They thought that it was like playing "Hamlet" with the same company that had previously performed in "She stoops to conquer." They withheld their sympathies from the more grave heroes whose features were associated, so to speak, with Tony Lumpkin, and Young Hardcastle. The reading world like old playgoers, enjoy to see old favourites in old parts; and they continued to protest against change. It has been remarked by Mr. Dicey that, had anybody but the author of "Jack Hinton" written the "Dodd Family" or "Kilgobbin," he would have passed at once to a rank into which Lever never effected a solid entrance.

Nothing can be more unlike "Lorrequer" than the later works of his manhood. A matured judgment, ripe experience, and height of aim are everywhere as apparent in the later volumes as is the absence of ballast in the first. But bright flags and swelling sails look more attractive in the distance than the steady ballast lying below. It was by the very levity to which we refer that Lever rose: unlike Jerry Keller who dryly complained that he sank by his levity

while others had risen by their gravity. Mr. Chambers had declared that Lever's fault was in mistaking farce for wit. From different passages in his letters, it is clear that broad farce, at least in modern theatres, proved distasteful to him. He said that the farce that made his earlier novels so popular was done rather in violence to his own convictions, which felt that he had been destined to tread a higher walk. Their style, as already observed, was adopted mainly in deference to McGlashan's hints. In 1856 his mentor died, and thenceforth came a change. Previous to this event Lever sought to warn him of impending danger. He wished McGlashan were with him, boating, bathing, and basking in the most joyous of the Mediterranean landscapes; to puff his weed over the dark rocks and blue waters would be more repose to a tired head than all the drugs and devices of the doctors. He promised to give him lots of lobsters and Vino D'Asti if he'd come: there was no success in business nor even in life that is not too dearly bought by the exhaustion of overtaxed strength. He owned that he was selfish in this counsel, for he feared he should, if he lived, want his help for many a day to come. No man ever understood him so well: in giving himself, he would also give the author, fair play.

The shrewd publisher and clever editor, wise in his treatment of all things unless himself, disregarded Lever's hint, and sought pleasure in the mode which hastened the death of Burns and darkened the last days of Sheridan. Lever's medical skill has been questioned:

in diagnosis at least he showed acumen. Thirteen years before the smash of McGlashan's mind he warned him —but in a pleasant way so as to avoid inflicting a shock—that rest had become a vital necessity to his brain. In 1842 McGlashan went to London, but Lever observed he seemed more intent on work than recreation, and that he needed repose and amusement. This he urged him to take without fatigue—the advice of a man, he added, who had practised both physic and philandering for many years, and with some success in both walks! Subsequently we find rest and recreation again prescribed; but Lever was so much in the habit of seeking McGlashan's counsel that the latter attached little weight to advice coming from him. McGlashan continued to work away, and by every stroke sapped his strength the deeper. To the penalties which Lever saw in store for him he rapidly succumbed. Disease had entered through the subtle valves of the intellect.* In his

* Of McGlashan, Canon Hayman writes:—"I knew him well and esteemed him highly. He was the real editor of the Magazine before and after Lever's time, and as a non-contributing director he discharged editorial duties with more efficiency than if he were a writer. The last letter I had from him was addressed to me at the English lakes, in the autumn of 1854. There was a strange tone in it that made me suspect that something was wrong in the cerebellum. He was querulous and desponding. This was just the beginning of his malady, which developed itself rapidly. He thought he was a bankrupt, while in truth his credit was first-class, and his estate paid (I believe) twenty shillings in the £1.

"Ireland owes more to this Scot than is generally believed. Had McGlashan lived, with 'mens sana in corpore sano,' the publishing trade of Dublin would have been better maintained than it has been. He was an excellent judge of what was good in itself and what would not fail to sell."

reply Lever diagnosed further mischief. He sorrowed for the wreck of one of the acutest intellects and warmest hearts he had ever known. To Mr. Wardlaw he wrote, begging to be given in all confidence some exact account of him, which he would take as a great favour and a great consolation. Lever remembered how much he owed to the calmer judgment of McGlashan. The wisdom of his counsel is apparent from many letters still preserved, as well as the tact with which he dissuaded Lever from writing some weak books on which his heart had been set, and guiding his hand to make really good hits.

McGlashan, if now living, would express equally strong appreciation as regards Lever. "Mac was the brightest and most pleasant companion I ever knew," writes Charles Grey—"always joyous and good-natured. Many a happy evening we had together at his house. He repeatedly said to me, 'I have had to do with a number of literary men in my time both in Edinburgh and in Ireland, but Charles Lever is the most perfect gentleman in all his dealings I have ever met.'"*

He informed McGlashan in 1855 that the climate in Florence was delicious, but enervating to an extent beyond belief; but if his physical health was impaired his spirits and energy were strong. If he lived till next year, he would be the near neighbour of McGlashan,

* Letter of Charles Grey, Esq. R.H.A., June 27th, 1877. Mr. Grey has rendered very graceful service to polite arts and to Ireland—an onerous labour in which his gifted sons, Alfred and James Grey, have of late years co-operated.

and asked him to look out for something which might serve as a home for his children if he should be carried off. But the death of his old friend and adviser deranged this plan.

The proverb "out of sight out of mind" was completely negatived in the result of Lever's removal to the sunnier clime of Italy. Book after book appeared in which the scenes were laid in Ireland, and whose every page glowed with Celtic fire, while cosmopolitan in their philosophy. In sending his son to be educated in Ireland he further showed fidelity to Fatherland.

But by no means insular was he in the new plans and plots that revolved through his mind. A series of papers, he thought, beginning tolerably far back, called "Historic Tableaux," would take. Charles V. at his abdication—Luther at the Diet of Worms—John Huss in the Cathedral at Constance, &c. Other projects of his (Oct., 1854) were "Stories of the Ruined Houses of Ireland," and in June, 1855, "The Battle Fields of Europe."

This month found him covered once more with counterpane and leeches, and "warm-bathed to half his weight, from an attack of gout in the stomach." For several weeks his condition was so tottering that he could not get on horseback. The Magazine required a chapter of the story then in hand, and Lever's incompetency to supply it embittered his suffering and even tormented him in his sleep. Soon after he announces that two insurances of his were coming due, and requesting his publisher to send sixty pounds to meet them; he had

almost hoped that he was going to cheat the company and give them the slip. But the alarm only proved what Curran would call "a runaway knock," and he was ready for harness once more.

In whist with Baron Erlanger, or in banter with his "bairns," he forgot minor worries. "What I know of Lever," writes the Baron, "all those know who crossed his threshold. He was the kindest of hosts, the most reliable of friends. Many a time have I travelled in midsummer night to his charming little cottage near Florence. On opening the gate we already heard his gay voice, laughing and talking; officially we came to play whist. You know that Lever took no pride in his pen. He loved his literary pursuits, of course, but no panegyric about his last book would have given him as much satisfaction as an acknowledgment of his superiority at whist. He loved the game beyond anything. To us the cards were, I confess, a mere pretext. It was not one of those dire sittings where the cards are dealt gravely and every point scored in mournful silence. A continuous roar of laughter accompanied the game, which often lasted till late into the night. Every mistake gave rise to a new anecdote or some droll remark. Indeed, his wit and humour, his 'esprit,' as the French would call it more appropriately, never lacked for a moment a continuous cross fire of bon mots unprepared and spontaneous. His extraordinary memory always astonished us, and showed itself remarkably in the circumstance that he never repeated himself. A nice supper always

closed our evening: he gave us all he had, and you know he was not a rich man. Each time we came away more deeply impressed with his knowledge of life and human nature, and with his talent for looking upon the bright side of both. When we drove home to our hotel—thousands of glow-worms lighting the road and floating about our carriage—they seemed like the flashes from his great and grand mind dwelling with us still. Alas! that he should have gone so early. Ireland lost in him one of her most talented children, and all those who knew him, the most charming of companions." *

This feeling was thoroughly reciprocated. Lever in dedicating a later story to him said, "Through the many anxieties which beset me while I was writing it, your name was constantly recurring, and always with some act of kindness, or some proof of affection."

"The Martins of Cro' Martin" now appeared—a thoroughly Irish story, tinged by the sadness of his own experiences when ministering to the sufferings of cholera patients in Clare. The *Athenæum* in reviewing it declared that "Lever had committed his one dull novel"—a stroke which his sensitive nature painfully felt.

"*Chateaubriand! pourquoi fuir ta patrie?*" wrote Béranger. The same question was often put to Lever, who, when nightmare ceased to plague him, had fondly

* Letter of the Baron Erlanger, Paris, 30th of March, 1879. The Baron adds that in looking over his correspondence with Lever, he finds it of so private a character that even a *resumé* of it would prove of no public interest, and that he fears he cannot lighten or add to the task of his Biographer; but we beg to assure the Baron how acceptable is his vivid and touching sketch.

wandered in dreams to the land of the West. He found it hard to answer the question until, in 1858, a consular appointment came and nailed him to exile for the rest of his days. Nevertheless, he was much elated on receiving his commission as Vice-Consul at Spezzia—the new Portsmouth of the then kingdom of Sardinia. But like its uniform, all was not gold that glittered.*

Contemporaneously with "Con Cregan" appeared "The Daltons," the original conception of which was due to the impressions produced on Lever's mind, as he tells us, by "the stories of his old friend and school-fellow" [Major D——], "who had entered the Austrian service, and rose to rank and honours in it."† Major

* An able letter from an English consul appeared in the *Standard*, June 13, 1872, in which he declared that the "consular service of Great Britain was at its very lowest." "For our wives and children there is no pension; we may be reduced at any moment to vice-consulates—witness Venice and Damascus; we may be recalled at a moment's notice, leaving no time to sell off." The writer added that the worst view of our consular service was when we compare it with the French or other great Continental powers. He was much amused by a travelling Englishwoman, whose cousin had a row with a gardener, crying, "Send for the English Consul!" in the vein of Lady Augusta Bramleigh, "that admirable creation of a distinguished colleague; and this was in a place where a consul is honoured, as long as he deserves honour, more than the nobles of the land."

Nothing could be more precarious than consular employment at this time. The very office which Lever got was abolished on February 13th, 1867—as a letter from the Foreign Office, now before us, announces. Lever, however, mainly through the exertions of Chief Justice Whiteside, received a promotion to Trieste, of which more presently.

† "From the hour I was introduced to him," continues the genial survivor, "we were friends, and remained so to the last hour of his life. His uniform kindness to me was certainly not owing to my having ever flattered him or burned incense on his altar. So far from it, I often pointed out to him trifling inaccuracies and incongruities such as an old soldier detects; and what is still more likely to wound an author's vanity, I made

D—— had never seen "The Daltons," or the last preface to it, which pointed so unmistakably to him, until the present writer drew his attention to both. "Perhaps I may be as in the preface he represents me," writes the Major, "or perhaps I may at least have seemed to be so. As to the story itself, I cannot judge until I have read it; but every one of the few pages I looked into contains some exaggeration in those details which are introduced for the very purpose of giving *vraisemblance* to the narrative. The characters in this, as in most of his novels, are real living men and women, but they are clad in garments such as are only found in the wardrobe of a theatre, and surrounded by accessories of a truly incomprehensible, incongruous, and anachronistic character. But I suppose that this is what pleases the public."

Lever, as the book grew beneath his hand, gradually relinquished incidents suggested by Major D——'s career. The latter portion of "The Daltons" included scenes from the Italian campaign, then in progress; and Lever's pen sped, while the earth was already tremulous under the march of mighty squadrons. He regarded the army of that day as the direct representatives of those who had bivouacked round the fires of Wallenstein's camp; and, as usual, old associations nerved his

no secret of my never having read one half his novels, which is literally true up to the present moment. It is only doing fair justice to his memory to say that although he liked to be admired, and was keenly alive both to praise and blame, he never exacted the one from his friends, nor greatly resented the other in captious critics, for enemy he scarce had one."

hand, while the early martial spirit of his nature once more asserted its vitality. Kinglake, too, the historian of the Crimean War, charmed Lever by the vigour of his battle scenes and the honesty of passages which cut deeply at the Tuileries, and he inscribed to him "The Bramleighs" as a record alike of his genius and his courage.

Lever had been much in Lord Methuen's society at Florence. His dedication of "The Daltons" assures "my dear Methuen" that "a real person introduced in the book was a right true-hearted Englishman, and to him I wish to dedicate it, in testimony not only of the gratitude which, in common with all his countrymen here, I feel to be his due, but in recognition of many happy hours passed in his society, and the honour of his friendship. The personality begins and ends with this dedication."

Lever's novels may be divided into two classes—the purely Celtic and the more cosmopolitan. "The Daltons" belong to the latter category, and went far to strengthen our author's reputation.

It has been said that to do well anything, however trifling, we must give our whole thought to it. That Lever should be writing two novels together, just as he drove "his pair of bloods" in Derry, shows that there is no rule without an exception. "The Dodd Family" and "Sir Jasper Carew" came out also simultaneously. The hail of adversity fell on Lever shortly before the publication of "The Daltons"; but so buoyant was his nature, that his heart remained unchilled. Just before

his death he wrote a new preface to "The Daltons"; from which it appears that in throwing back his mind's eye to the period he saw only the sunlit spots.*

"Nearly every line of this story was written in good health and spirits. It was no labour to me to sit at my desk the hour or hour-and-half which sufficed to carry on my story. The incidents I wanted occurred to me without an effort; and the characters amused me—I am afraid to own how much. Certain experiences of my own had taught me how much of actual tragedy is mingled with the genteel comedy of life, and that things of terrific meaning are continually occurring through that well-bred world, whose chief functions might seem pleasure and enjoyment. I tried to adapt this experience to the scenes before me, and to show that amid all the frivolities of fashion there are mingled the passions which exhaust themselves in crime. Although no longer

* Lever, in his last preface to "The Daltons," connects his friend the Major with certain remarks on Austria, which, when we directed his attention to them, he did not wholly endorse. But a later letter adds:—"I must correct something I wrote to you with reference to the introduction to 'The Daltons.' It is quite true that I did more than once refer to Austria becoming a centre of civilization, that is to say, of the German element of which the court, the dynasty, and the ministry were then the representatives, being such a centre for the Magyar and Slav elements within the limits of the empire. This was Austria's real function, but unfortunately, as I think, the principle of 'divide et impera' was resorted to, and the various nationalities were played off against one another, with what baneful results we can now see; besides which, the representation of the German element has passed to a great extent into other hands. At first sight the passage referred to read as if I had looked upon Austria as being or ever likely to become a centre of civilization amongst the neighbouring kingdoms or other states beyond its own borders; and this was what I repudiated, perhaps somewhat too vehemently."

a young man, I had not yet felt one touch of age, nor knew myself other than I was at five-and-twenty; and it was in this conscious buoyancy of temperament, joined to a shrewder knowledge of life—that imparted to me a sense of enjoyment in society for which I have no word but ecstasy.

"The unceasing business of life went on before me like a play in which, if occasionally puzzled by the plot, I could always anticipate the dénouement by my reading of the actors. Such a theatre was Florence in those old Grand Ducal times—times which, whatever the political shortcomings—were surrounded with a charm of existence words cannot picture. If it were an obligation on me to re-live any portion of my life, I should select this part, even in preference to earlier youth and more hopeful ambition. Neither is the choice or the necessity before me, and I am satisfied to recall the recollection with gratitude, and declare that it was a most happy time and meminisse juvat."

To the occasional "ecstasy" of this time the visits of Thackeray not a little contributed. "He was repeatedly with Lever at Florence," writes Major D——, "and these two men, as they came to know each other better, and after Thackeray's fame had been established, became warm and genuine friends. Lever had less jealousy of others' success than most men, and not a particle of envy in his nature. If there was any writer towards whom he felt otherwise than cordially it was Mr. Dickens, and this only because injudicious partisans and so-called friends,

had pitted the two men against each other, at the commencement of their careers.*

"I met Thackeray at Vienna, and found him much more refined and tender than he had appeared at Templeogue. He had been to Florence, when he spoke of pleasant hours passed with Lever. At that time the political reaction which followed the great uprising of 1848 was at its zenith, Italy was once more under the yoke, and representative government had been, after a short trial, put an end to in Hungary, as in Austria generally. All this was a great disappointment to Thackeray, and he was evidently sore on the subject. Lever, who was an eye-witness of much of the Italian revolutionary movement, did not much regret what had happened, and had evidently not concealed his satisfaction. These two men were to a certain extent political agents; Lever naturally so, as being vice-consul at Spezzia, whilst Thackeray, as he told me himself, came

* It is due to both those distinguished men to say that they became eventually warm friends. In "O'Dowd" Lever says that "Dickens has given to our fiction-literature a racy vigour and a freshness which only genius can give," and that he is "the greatest imaginative writer, unquestionably, since Shakespeare. With him we encounter no repetitions; all is varied, novel, and interesting as nature herself; and this great master of humour moves us to tears or laughter without the semblance of an effort on his part; and as for those 'inexpensive guests' that sit beside our fireplaces at lone hours, or stroll with us in our solitary rambles, we owe more of them to Charles Dickens than to any other writer of the century." The Dedicatory Letter, prefixed to "The Barringtons," and dated Spezzia, Dec. 26, 1862, crowns this little episode. "My dear Dickens. Among the thousands who read and re-read your writings you have not one who more warmly admires your genius than myself; and to say this in confidence to the world, I dedicate to you this story."

to Vienna to see how things stood, and possibly to write something on the subject, which, however, I think he did not do, though, no doubt, he made verbal reports in influential quarters; he certainly took a good deal of pains to collect information, especially about the leading people at Vienna, many of whom he met at the British Embassy, where he was a frequent guest. Novelists, especially such accurate observers of character as were Thackeray and Lever, who moreover, spoke foreign languages fluently, ought to be specially well qualified for a certain kind and degree of political agency, namely, for judging of men and what may be expected from them. No doubt the reports of such men must be listened to with reserve, for even admitting that they see things as they are, so far as form is concerned, it is almost certain that they will have done so through coloured glasses each according to his own favourite tint, in fact it would be wise to study such a man's novels quite as attentively as his official reports.

"Thackeray evidently enjoyed continental life very much; he said to me more than once, that Lever's existence was very enviable, from his official position and his opportunities of seeing a great variety of national people and tongues all jumbled up together at such a lovely place and in so charming a climate as that of Florence. He spoke so decidedly of the *désagréments* of London in this respect, that Lever asked him why he did not make up his mind to follow his example? He answered: 'I am as completely tied to London as a street-sweeper

to his crossing, and can as little afford to give it up, although I long for some rest.' But, said I, surely you are sufficiently independent now to live where you please, and you could both go on writing and live less expensively in Germany or France. 'Well, yes! but I have not as yet put by as much for my children as I wish them to have, and so I must go on working for some years to come.'

"Thackeray did not live to see the fulfilment of nearly all that he desired for Italy, Hungary, and Germany. The Mincio line and the greater part of the Papal dominions had indeed been gained for Italy; the Bourbons had been expelled from Naples, but how small all that now appears to us who have survived him. Lever, on the contrary, lived to see almost everything he cared for, in the way of politics, defeated and upset, both at home and abroad. If Thackeray longed for rest and the enjoyment of continental life, Lever yearned still more ardently for London and its life. In 1865, he wrote to me saying, that he had made a great mistake in leaving England and going to live abroad permanently. I doubt that he would have lived so long and so happily, or written so well if he had been 'tied to his London crossing'; in fact, I am sure he would never have held out, for he dearly loved wandering and change."*

* The Major's recollections of Lever and Thackeray—of which the above is a small part—thus concludes:—"I may have seemed to write in too familiar a style of two men so distinguished in literature, as Thackeray and Lever. I could not indeed write of them otherwise than as friends to me, they were good and true friends, merely out of the innate kindliness and

"Lever, in his confidential communications with his publishers," continues the Major, "is found entirely subordinating his own views and leanings to those of the public, whose servant he professed himself to be and really was. This too serves to explain why he would not undertake to write a three vol. novel, as Mr. Bentley desired. His plan was to modify as he went along, not the plot, for he scarcely had one, but his characters and the degree of prominence assigned to each so as to suit the public taste, for which method the serial form of publication alone affords opportunities. 'St. Patrick's Eve,' at no time a popular book, was written off-hand, and published without having been previously introduced in a serial form."

Lever said that the writers of serial stories understood at least one requirement of their trade—they do not give too much at a time; and in so far they resemble the heads of the profession, the old Eastern story tellers, who only told the caliph each evening enough to set him asleep. He also recognised as an advantage that they cannot cram into their limited space any of those long-winded descriptions, especially of scenery, which the

exuberant tenderness of their natures, and they also esteemed and regarded each other most affectionately as I well know. Of their respective merits as authors, I express no opinion; even whilst in the enjoyment of their society I almost forgot their eminence, and thought of them only as delightful companions; now that they are gone, all that remains to me is a very grateful remembrance of their friendship, and a deep sense of many noble qualities of mind and heart in both." In our "Portfolio," appended, the reader will find a further full record of the Major's intercourse with Thackeray and Lever.

three-volume people are so prone to inflict; neither have they so much of the page open to emotional expatiation. They are bound by their very limits to be more sharp, short, and decisive; moreover, the reader is not bound to them beyond the monthly part before him. "It is like a shilling stage, and if you dislike the conveyance, or feel tired of the company, you can get out and walk home." For all these reasons he inclined to the serial. Lever, from his prolonged companionship with Mr. G. P. R. James, seems to have been let into the secret of his *modus operandi*. He declared that all the three-volume man ever thought of was his wind up. "It is for the grand finish alone he cares; his heart, like the Irish postilions, is fixed on keeping a 'trot for the town,' no matter how he stumbled and staggered during the stage, so that he comes up to the door at last with whip cracking and the jaded team spirited up to a lively tramp." Lever's letters show that it was the "wind up" he invariably found most difficult.

All criticisms on his monthly parts, as they appeared, he desired to see. Less thin-skinned than of yore, he asked his friends in Ireland to send him every sort of notice. Praise and blame came diluted by distance, less cloying if sweet—less acid if sour—but in either case more profitable. To his publishers, he more than once said, that there was nothing he disliked more than to be asked to fill up the tail-pieces of numbers; it was as hard as to clear off the bottom of decanters.

From revision, too, he continued to recoil. In 1858

he said that he wished he could as easily apologise for the faults of his stories, as he could detect and deplore them; but, like the failings in one's nature, they are often difficult to correct even when acknowledged.

A suggestion having been thrown out by his publishers, that one of his stories, as it verged towards the "finis," might be advantageously extended, he replied, that having put the characters to bed, he had no heart to waken them up again for the sake of shaking the feathers and arranging the pillows more comfortably, and then breaking the figure as the indomitable fertility of his fancy constantly made him do—added that he had the bones of a better book in the chamber of his head; but when his skeleton would clothe with flesh, was more than he could say.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Davenport Dunn"—"One of Them"—"Gerald Fitzgerald"—Sienna—Lever and his daughter capsized in the Bay of Spezzia—Their narrow escape—Garibaldi visits him for a political end—Hurls a rude fellow into a reservoir—Action taken against Lever by a Tuscan—Stinging retort to Sir H—— E——.—A gossiping neighbourhood.

The year 1859 introduced "Davenport Dunn, the Man of our Day," which effectively utilised some leading incidents in the life of John Sadleir, Junior Lord of the Treasury, who, after an unscrupulous career, is alleged to have committed suicide at Hampstead. This the *Athenæum* pronounced to be Lever's best book, one sufficiently full of stir to satisfy a schoolboy's love for adventure, yet strong enough in portrait-painting to attract graver men. "Davenport Dunn" embraced one of the best of his characters—Grog Davis, whose strength of character is ingeniously reproduced to a better purpose in his high-hearted daughter—a strength so skilfully contrasted with the weak frivolity of the young aristocrat, their associate.

He interspersed his story with much pleasant matter. To his publisher he said that the light horse of literature fought best as skirmishers, and displayed any little

brilliancy they possessed when acting independently of discipline.

His official labours at Spezzia were not proportioned to the width of its waters. In fact he had not much more to do than boat and bask on its beautiful Bay. He described it as capable of containing all the harbours of France and England, and have room for all the fleets of Europe besides. About seven miles in depth, and varying in width from two to three and a half, it is fissured on every side by beautiful little bays, with deep water everywhere, and, not a sunk rock or shoal, or a bar, throughout the whole extent.

Here, in his pretty cottage, Marola, he wrote "One of Them," published in 1861. After describing his Dispensary, and struggles at Portstewart, the reader is brought to Florence, where a good glimpse of diplomatic life is disclosed. This book was partly autobiographic, and, *en passant*, we catch a glimpse even of his gout. He is described as "muffled up in rugs, and his foot on a stool; and in all the restlessness of that painful malady. A mass of unopened letters lay on the table beside him, littered as it was with physic bottles, pill-boxes, and a small hand bell. On the carpet, around him, lay the newspapers and reviews, newly arrived, but all indignantly thrown aside, and uncared for."

To Mr. Labouchere, who asked him to name whichever of his novels he deemed best suited for the stage, he replied, that if a sensation drama were required, he thought "One of Them" a good subject, but that "Kil-

gobbin" would be the best for dialogue. He also thought that "O'Donoghue" might, from its stirring incident, have a good chance of success.

The Irish serial, for which Lever wrote, passed, after Mr. McGlashan's death, into the hands of Mr. Digby Starkey and Mr. Cheyne Brady, who filled in the Law Courts the dryest of dry offices, but to whom letters were not wholly distasteful. Overtures were made to Lever to resume his old connection, and the serial story of "Gerald Fitzgerald" was the result. This was the name of a college chum, one of the signatories to the sham address in 1831. The story made no material addition to his fame, and is the only one of Lever's which seems never to have been reprinted.

"At Sienna, where Garibaldi was then with his legion," observes Robert Maunsell, "I called upon Lever, having known his brother the clergyman, who attended my kinsman, the murdered Earl of Norbury, on his death-bed, apparently to his great annoyance, as he told him he knew all he had to say. Lever was all animation; but Mrs. Lever, then in the decline of life, seemed delicate and languid: always reclining on the sofa, and dressed effectively, sometimes a white morning-gown, richly brocaded, her person exhibiting traces of great beauty. Lever at this time was not of a prepossessing appearance. He was so corpulent, that when seated, his legs seemed hidden. But he could swim well; and, indeed, sometimes seemed amphibious; he and all his

family being constantly in or on the water.* Having been capsized at one time in the middle of the Bay, they swam gallantly to shore with their clothes on;† they had a mile to swim, which was indeed no trouble to them. They could rest on the water for a long time previous to making an effort to swim. He had little society and less conversation in Sienna; but he made up in whist for that taciturnity called in Ireland 'Whist!'"

Mr. Maunsell notices lightly an accident which well-nigh proved fatal. Lever and his daughter had nearly lost their lives by the capsizing of their boat in the Bay of Spezzia, where Shelley, by the way, was drowned more than forty years before. Mr. Maunsell says that they swam a mile to shore; and the journals of the day, and magazine memoirs after Lever's death, state that the distance they had to swim for their lives on this occasion exceeded three miles. For these exaggerations, Lever had no one but himself to blame. In describing adventures, he mechanically, and we believe unconsciously, embellished. Of this we have proof in a letter of William Hartpole Lecky, too racy to omit. "I well remember how a large tableful of Italian Naval Officers were electrified by his conversation, and especially by the fire and vividness with which he told a story, which I afterwards found in one of his books, of how he, his

* Lever himself writes:—"I apportioned out my whole day, from my first morning swim, ere the sea grew hot and fiery, to my last row at night, when the land-breeze came through the orange groves."

† Lever and his daughters always wore swimming costumes.

daughter, and his poodle dog were one day upset in the Gulf, and how they swam; Miss Lever carrying the dog on her back. When Lever left the table I was greatly amused by the exclamation of one of the officers, who had known him of old. 'What a wonderful man that is! I have heard that anecdote again and again; but it seems always fresh—there are always new incidents.'"

Now for the unvarnished version which is, in itself, highly curious. From the letters written to Ireland, chiefly by his daughter, and addressed to different members of the family, it would appear that the accident originated in an attempt of Miss Lever to rescue her dog, which had swam to an injudicious distance from the boat. The boat capsized where the water was of fabulous depth, and the crew were cast on this great expanse. Father and daughter grasped oars, and thus kept themselves afloat until aid at last arrived. They were more than a mile from the shore. A younger daughter of Mr. Lever's saw the accident from her window. With great presence of mind, she refrained from alarming her mother or other members of the family; but, quietly gliding to the quay, sent out a boat to the relief of those so justly dear to her. Equal nonchalance was shown by Miss Lever in her perilous position. During the interval, more full of anxiety to those on land than to the capsized crew, she amused herself by keeping her lap-dog's paws on the oar next her own. Fortunately the sea was as calm as their own minds. Miss Lever remarked that an attack of acute neuralgia, from which she had long

suffered, was completely cured, either by the prolonged immersion, or by the shock operating on her nervous system. As to Lever himself, he referred to the accident laughingly, and once went so far as to say that no man would ever wish to be rescued from drowning, if he only knew the tortures that awaited him from what is called the Humane Society—the very description of which, makes the guillotine or the garotte seem in comparison like a mild anodyne!

Some false reports of his death found circulation this year; just a decade before his actual departure; and he was killed by editors with as little compunction as he himself extinguished ideal heroes. This liberty he noticed to one of the assassinating-pressmen, but, merely suggested with great delicacy to make the *amende* by giving the "Barringtons" a "shove over the stile." "I believe the story is not bad, at least not worse than most of the same sort which goes down with the public. As my critics were wont to blackguard me for over writing, let me have the (supposed) advantage to be derived from its being a full twelvemonth since the world has heard of me, except as having died at Spezzia last April." This story he dedicated to one who had just proved himself a formidable rival, Joseph Sheridan Lefanu.

In the "Barringtons," Lever portrays his own son and his career; but in an irregular way, confusing the chronology, and intermingling impossibilities with actual occurrences.

"It was at the time of the Fenian affair in Ireland,"

writes Major D——, "that Garibaldi breakfasted with Lever at Spezzia, and I am not sure that the affair may not have been done in concert with the British Minister at Florence. Garibaldi had been writing strong letters of sympathy with the Fenians, and Lever explained to him very clearly at breakfast, that if he continued to do so, he would destroy all sympathy the English might have for him, and his further plans for Italy. From that date there was no further mention made of Garibaldi's name in connection with Fenianism. Lever told me that Garibaldi was very much astonished at what he, Lever, explained to him about Ireland, and finished by saying to me, that he never could comprehend how a man seemingly so ignorant and childish as Garibaldi could come to have such vast influence, and do so much. That was twelve years ago, and since then, many others have come to a similar conclusion with regard to Garibaldi."

Lever's intercourse with the General at Spezzia, led to an impression that he was a thorough partisan, and news of his adhesion was not long in reaching Ireland. An "O'Dowd" paper, however, explained: "As for myself, don't be shocked, but I do like doubtful company; that is, I am immensely interested by all that class of people which the world calls adventurers, whether the same be railroad speculators, fortune-hunters, discoverers of inexhaustible mines, or Garibaldians."

Lever, like O'Lynn, whose adventures he often whistled and warbled, found it "pleasant and cool" to wear a

linen suit during the warmer months in Italy.* "Thus clad," observes an informant, "his shirt-collar open, and a book also open upon his knee, he fell asleep, on one particular occasion, in a chair at the public baths at Spezzia. An English footman entering, and mistaking Lever for the attendant, seized him by the collar which he shook, and called for a bath. 'There,' exclaimed Lever, grasping the man of 'calves' and hurling him, plush and all, into the reservoir at his feet."

The English consul was privileged to do what he pleased with an English lackey; and we do not find that any trouble followed as in the case of the Tuscan tailor, to be described later on. This incident, or one akin to it, will be found depicted by Phiz in "The Daltons," and described as "a hydropathic remedy." †

Men who addressed Lever in mistake, made excuse by saying that his odd dress deceived them; but he replied, that like some of his own stories, one ought not to judge the book by the cover. He always fancied that he thought and wrote with more freedom in a *négligé* dress than if braced up in the stiffer style of Poole. "Costume," he used to say, "has great influence over people's acts; the man in his shooting-jacket will give

* Mr. Harry Innes, his close companion in boyhood, writes:—"Lever added a verse to this popular Irish melody, not the worst of the ten:

"Bryan O'Lynn had no watch to put on,
He scooped out a turnip to make him a one,
He put a brown cricket just under the skin,
'They'll think it is ticking,' says Bryan O'Lynn."

† Florence, ch. xxii., p. 211, v. 2.

way to impulsive outbursts that he had never thought of yielding to in his white cravat moments."

The Spezzia folk supposed that Lever was asleep, not only on the occasion thus described, but at other times, when he presented an aspect of luxurious somnolency; but, like Lords Palmerston and Beaconsfield, he was wide awake all the while. He took no shame to himself that he could not work beneath an Italian sun, and he resigned his whole being to a voluptuous indolence, as though obeying an ordinance of nature. "I reflect, however, much, but I do so always with my eyes closed, and a pillow under my head; and with such a semblance of perfect repose that calumnious people have said I was asleep. And really there is in the hot basking noon of Italy, while the ear rings with the cicala, and the very atmosphere glitters, a something of intense enjoyment, as though it were a world made for pure delight, for all that can steep the senses in rich enjoyment, and draw over the mind a dreamy rapture, the seventh heaven of ecstatic fancy."

Maturin used to wear a red wafer on his forehead, as an intimation to his household that he was then engaged in creative thought, and was not to be disturbed. A similar understanding had once existed in Lever's family. "These hours of reflection," he tells us in 1865, "occupy a large share of the forenoon, and of the time between an early dinner and sunset. They are periods of great enjoyment; they once were even more so, when an opinion prevailed that it would be little short of sacrilege

to disturb me, such being the creative hours of my active intelligence. The faith has long since changed for a less reverent version of my labours, and people are less scrupulous about interruption. Long habit, however, stands my part, and I can return to my broken reflections at any moment, and follow out their course as pleasantly and as profitably as before."

He lay in one of these intellectual swoons, after a long swim, with a faint sea breeze stealing gently into the room through the closed jalousies, when he was startled by the boom of cannon from the English fleet, as it proudly entered the bay; and he gives a long account of his intercourse with the officers and their brawny blue-eyed men,—how he dined with them constantly, beat them at whist, and entertained them in return. He met the officers at picnics and balls, and was amused to see them going at the Lancers "as if they were boarding a Frenchman." He associated with them in their flirtations, and cordially welcomed them to the land of moonlight and Shelley. Lever calls them generous fellows, with whom he lived lately so happily, "drank to them all health and prosperity," and when the hour for separation came, it was effected not without a sigh.*

* He went on a short cruise in one of the ships, when a sham fight at midnight was got up for his entertainment—of all of which he gives an account in a letter to John Lever, and sent for the perusal of Harry Innes, the only thing from his pen descriptive of nautical life:—"Lever learned that an officer of the fleet hailed from Kilkenny," writes Mr. Innes. "He was immediately hunted up, and became for some days an inmate of his

The locality in which he lived was much given to gossip. "There is not one of them," he said, "who would not rather find out how Mrs. Rigges got that new bonnet with the fall of real lace—'Valenciennes, my dear!'—than know how Prussia jockied Austria out of Holstein." This sort of thing annoyed him at first, but ere long he was wise enough to seek honey from these sources of stings. "I live in a small neighbourhood," he writes, "a circle so limited that each of us knows perfectly every circumstance of the other—his means, his tastes, his joys, troubles, and creditors." And again:—"We all live with such accurate information about each other, that disguise or concealment would be the most miserable of all failures; and this same openness is more effectual in the suppression of many little affectations and snobberies than a *régime* of the most perfect good taste and good manners." He said that he could no more dare to "give sixpence more for the turbot in the market than my neighbour has offered, than I could make love to the wife of his bosom; for I know that the fishmonger must come down to his price, and it would be perfidy in me to enhance it." But philosophic consolation was drawn from these and other reflections, and he finally decided that such customs proved a death-blow to all pretension and rivalry.

But for the sameness in his life, more incident would

house, and passed a time that, long after, he looked upon as a bright spot on memory's waste. Lever's recollections of old days and old scenes had a vividness beyond the understanding of come-day and go-day good people."

mark his books. Every tiny tale which he heard in casual talk was at once seized, and in reproduction enriched. How his brain continued, without adequate fuel, to work so well, is a marvel. The military men with whom he had mixed in early life fed "Lorrequer," "O'Malley," "Jack Hinton," and "Tom Burke." Lever's dry diplomatic life abroad presented of late years few points of nutrition for novels, and yet, instead of the attractive adventures of a subaltern or an aide-de-camp as of yore, we find him turning to good account the proceedings of a private secretary or an *attaché* of the Foreign Office. One day a sensational incident well nigh cut short his own consular career. He promised a friend at this time that he would amuse him some day in telling the cause of his sudden departure from Spezzia. On applying for an explanation to the man who shared the most largely Lever's confidence, he replies:—

"The Vice-Consulship at Spezzia was created for Lever by the Tory Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the day, and as there was really nothing for him to do at Spezzia he contrived to live at Florence.* A Whig

* Very exaggerated impressions exist as to the amount of Lever's salaries. One essayist describes Lord Derby saying, "Here, Lever, is £800 a year for doing nothing; and you are the very man to do it." A letter from Lord Derby, dated "Foreign Office, February 1st, 1877," supplies the real data.

Mr. Charles Lever held the appointment of Vice-Consul at Spezzia, in the consular district of Genoa, with a salary of £250 a year, from November 26, 1858, until February 13, 1867, when that post was abolished. He was then promoted to be Her Majesty's Consul at Trieste [March 2, 1867], with a salary of £500 a year, and an allowance of £100 for office expenses, which post he held until his death June 1, 1872."

Ministry soon after came into power, Lord R—— being Foreign Secretary. Lord R——'s first step was to take away Sir J. H—— from Turin and the minor Italian courts to which he was accredited, and to send out in his place his own brother-in-law, Sir H. E——. H——'s first move was to haul up Lever for not residing at Spezzia; on which occasion he threw it in Lever's teeth that the Vice-Consulship was a job got up for Lever's benefit; to which he replied 'that at least he did not owe it to his brother-in-law,' or something awfully cheeky to that effect. Lever was very near losing the post; and afterwards, when Lord Stanley (now Lord Derby) came to the Foreign Office, he transferred Lever to the Consulship at Trieste."

One of the personages alluded to by Major D—— as holding a high diplomatic post, which he received through an influential kinsman, said to Lever at Florence, in presence of several persons, "Your appointment seems a perfect sinecure. How can you be Consul at Spezzia and live entirely at Florence? You got it, I suppose, in recognition of your novels?" "Yes, sir," replied Lever, "I got it in compliment to my brains; you got yours in compliment to your relatives."

His diplomatic employment brought him into frequent intercourse with Foreign Office swells, whom he constantly photographs in his later books, from Sir Horace Upton in "Glencore," to Sir Shally Doubleton in "A Day's Ride."*

* Addressing a consul—probably Lever himself—one is made to say:—"Possibly your name may not be Paynter, sir: but you are evidently before me for the first time, or you would know that, like my great colleague and

His bluff outspoken nature made Lever not the best of diplomatists. At Florence a little incident occurred furnishing an illustration of his capacity for retort, but unluckily the barb recoiled upon his own too sensitive breast. "There was a terrace in front of the house reached by a flight of steps," writes a man who knew him well. "One day a tailor from the city waited on Lever as he was sitting on the terrace, with his bill for some clothes supplied to him. The charges appeared to be unconscionable. Lever remonstrated, the tailor insisted. The remonstrant grew angry, talked loudly, and gesticulated with vehemence. Sartor, in a fright, retreated backwards, fearing, as he said, some personal violence, till he reached the edge of the terrace and tumbled over. A summons to Lever to appear before the Court at Florence was the result. The tailor swore that he fell and was hurt in trying to escape being assaulted. Lever stated such an idea never entered his head, though he admitted that the man went backwards and fell as he alleged. The Court asked how he could account for the man's fright and movements on any other ground than that stated. 'On two grounds,' replied Lever. 'The man is a Tuscan, and a tailor;' an excellent speech in aggravation of damages, as he found to his cost."

If, after this untoward event, Lever became the terror

friend, Prince Metternich, I have made it a rule through life never to burden my memory with what can be spared it, and of these are the patronymics of all subordinate people; for this reason, sir, and to this end, every cook in my establishment answers to the name of Honoré, my valet is always Pierre, my coachman Jacob, and all Foreign Office messengers I call Paynter."

of tailors and Tuscans, he continued the delight of the Anglo-Florentine Society. In the companionship of Mr. and Mrs. Browning he found a real charm. Linked by letters, all political differences were forgotten, and laudation of Lever was always grateful to them. Miss Mitford, writing to Elizabeth Barrett Browning, at Florence about this time, refers to Lever in that pleasant comment, elsewhere given, which the poetess's previous praise of him evoked.

Time was when the rebuffs and vicissitudes met by an adventurous spirit beyond the Atlantic furnished excitement for the man and stirring incident for his biographer. But now *nous avons changé*, &c. The English Consul consoled himself by the thought that "if in the world of well-bred life the incidents and events were fewer because the friction is less than in the classes where vicissitudes are more frequent, the play of passion, the moods of temper, and the changeful vanities of nature are often very strongly developed, shadowed and screened though they be by the polished conventionalities of society. To trace and mark these has long constituted one of the pleasures of my life."

Without the occasional excitement of cards, however, he could never have got on as pleasantly as he did. He was provoked to find whist on the decline, and that a languid apathy seemed to overtake men who cared not for "cards" or "honours." Had they never heard of the terrible warning of Talleyrand to his friend who could not play, "Reflect on the miserable old age that

awaits you." "How much of human nature, that would otherwise be unprofitable, can be made available by whist! What scores of tiresome old twaddlers are there who can still serve their country as whisters! What feeble intelligences that can flicker out into a passing brightness at the sight of the "turned trump!" "Think of this," he added warmly, "and think what is to become of us when the old, the feeble, the tiresome, and the interminable will all be thrown broadcast over society without an object or an occupation. Imagine what bores will be let loose upon the world, and fancy how feeble will be all efforts of wit or pleasantry to season a mass of such incapables!"

He was not wholly dependent on whist to while away the evening. It was his habit to read aloud for his family the work of the morning. Of one of the books then in hand, he remarked to Hayman that, if its success in the world at large reached one tithe of its popularity at home, it would more than content any author's ambition.

His natural modesty made him deeply grateful for praise when he was fortunate enough to get it. Those who witnessed his delight will not soon forget the emotion with which he read an elaborate paper on his writings, which appeared in "Blackwood" about this time, and expressed a decided conviction that Mickey Free, and Major Monsoon and Kerry O'Leary and Baby Blake, Mary Martin and Kate O'Donoghue and Kenny and Mrs. Dodd should live along with Jeanie Deans, or Matthew Bramble, or Squire Western, as distinctly recognised types of national character.

CHAPTER IX.

An important friendship formed—J. G. Adair, Esq. D.L.—A delightful tour—His lavish hand—Thrift tried once more—Visit to the Dublin Exhibition—He leaves men of Herculean mould weak from laughter—Effect of his wit at Lord Lytton's and Lord Houghton's tables—Writes "Tony Butler," and also writes his will—Peculiarities of facial expression—"Cornelius O'Dowd"—"Sir Brook Fossbrooke"—A misfortune comes—"The Bramleighs"—"That Boy of Norcott's"—"Rent in a Cloud."

It will be remembered that Mr. John George Adair was appointed an executor under Lever's will. The origin of his acquaintance with Lever was under strange circumstances. Mr. Adair, accompanied by some friends, was returning from Fiesole in high spirits, and in the midst of a wild tempest, when their party was familiarly accosted from the Casa Caponi at Florence by a joyous voice exclaiming, "You must be Irishmen, or you'd never be laughing under such rain!" In a few minutes all were friends for life; and within three days, as the date of the will testifies, Lever appointed Mr. Adair his executor, a fact unknown to him until after the novelist's death. Lever ascertained that Mr. Adair had just accomplished the quickest journey on record from Ireland to Florence. "I am going to England in haste," said Lever, "and you are just the man to bear me company." He hated a hackneyed

route, and he suggested that they should go to Pisa, and from thence to Spezzia, where a steamer would be sure to touch for Marseilles, but didn't. They then proceeded by land to Genoa, passing through Parma and Lombardy—visiting the Lago di Maggiore—but the journey was here impeded by the snow, which blocked up the usual pass through the Alps. In short, a succession of contretemps—met with the pleasant philosophy of a Heraclitus, and ingeniously utilised for the purposes of perfect enjoyment—overtook them; and three weeks were consumed ere they reached Paris. It seemed, however, but three days. Lever told stories without end, and his companion found himself in almost one uninterrupted fit of laughter the whole time. In outlay Lever was lavish; Ducats were thrown everywhere that francs ought to have been given. Postilions received higher fees than physicians; and once, when some one urged him to be more economical, he fell into the opposite extreme by giving three sous to an ostler, who caused him great annoyance by the storm of wrath with which he acknowledged the gratuity.*

Lever, in his wonted pleasant way, remarked that, "Just as there are men most eager to become fox-hunters, but who never can sit a fence, or fellows dying

* Twenty years previously, when a comparatively poor man, the same open hand distinguished him. "O'Malley" gives a glimpse of the weakness. "Halloo, Orderly!" cried I, from the window, as I hurriedly sealed it, 'take this note back, and here's a guinea for yourself.' So saying, I pitched into his ready hand one of the very few which remained to me in the world."

to be yachtsmen, but who cannot conquer sea-sickness, I have a most ardent desire to be thrifty impressed upon me, I own, by that stern condition which is said to be beyond all law. I plot thrift, I dream thrift, but it invariably ends in failure. It's always the story of the pony and the window-shutter over again; and so assured have I become, by long and bitter experience, of my incapacity, that whenever I do anything particularly stingy, I have that sensation of mingled vanity and nervousness that so often is felt as the prelude to an outburst of reckless extravagance, and I almost revel in the sense of a thoughtless munificence."

Lever liked international exhibitions, but hated scientific congresses. Whether he recognised in their proceedings any paper which had already passed through his own hands editorially, we know not; but certain it is he pronounced them to be little else than grand gatherings for the disposal of rejected articles. "Whenever it is original, take your oath on it it is worthless. The coins flung out of the carriage-window never were guineas; and indeed, for the mere pleasure of seeing the beggars fight for them, halfpennies sufficed just as well."

The year 1865 found him in Ireland, attracted thither by a national exhibition at Dublin. A paper tells us that "he issued forth from the solitude of his rocks and wild olives to see a little of that great and busy world of whose doings for years he had only cognizance at second hand."

On a bright May morning he found himself in

Dublin; and he declared his conviction that the same carman that used to take him down to Ringsend as a boy drove him to his hotel. It was most gratifying to him to see everything so little changed, even to the battered beauties who sold oranges near the Provost's House.*

"A cead mille Failthe," that hearty phrase implying "One Hundred Thousand Welcomes" greeted him as usual; cheerful dinners steamed on every side. Actual beauty, excellent fish, and very tolerable claret graced the tables at which he sat. He was delighted with that hearty cordiality that greets you at the threshold, follows you to the drawing-room, goes with you to the dinner-table, and never leaves you till the last shake-hand at parting. "Of this I know of no equal anywhere: England assuredly has nothing like it, nor has France, nor Germany, nor Russia, nor Italy. Perhaps long absence, perhaps peculiarity of temperament, dispose to make these cordial graces especially dear to me, giving them that character which, in native air, is supposed to retain all its virtue of curability. Perhaps I fancy that in such companionship I feel more myself, more sure of my own resources, more sensible of my own identity."

William Hartpole Lecky, in the letter of reminiscence elsewhere quoted, mentions that he was invited to meet Lever on one of his last visits home. It may

* Had Lever's visit been deferred a few years later, he would have found the "battered beauties" banished—as well as the old bookstalls over which he had loved, in youth, to linger.

be remarked that if at dinner a man happened to be Lever's *vis-à-vis* who had been recognised as possessing a somewhat higher order of intellect, the Prince of Talkers quite succumbed, possibly by some animal magnetic influence. Mr. Lecky does not tell where he met Lever, or what passed; but the host on the occasion, a staunch friend—one charged with special powers under his will—well remembers how completely Lever "shut up" for the evening! The host and guests were Irish —and Lever's subjugation opens a curious point for study.

Put him among men who looked up to him, and he dazzled and electrified them. When visiting at Sir William Wilde's, the latter introduced to him Mr. Close, who would prove, he said, a good guide to the Exhibition. In a moment both seemed friends. Story after story was thrown off; every gallery, every bust and picture suggested countless pleasant memories. When all had been viewed, they adjourned to the Pavilion—a *marquee* for refreshment and rest—where Mr. Close presented two young friends, who highly appreciated the privilege of meeting Harry Lorrequer. Again a torrent of tales gushed forth. Hours sped like minutes, until, when at last all stood up to leave, Mr. Close—Hercules in strength as he was—felt absolutely weak from the endless paroxysms of laughter which Lever raised. "All my sympathies go with younger men," he said; "I like their ambition, their high hopes, and that bold self-confidence, which no man retains when he gets 'groggy.'"

The excitation attendant on these visits to Dublin was a natural reaction after his impassive life at Spezzia, which possessed no society, and where eternal boating, bathing, and basking were his sole enjoyments. Its tropical heat, he said, "tended to promote that delicious languor wherein thought goes to sleep, and the mind enjoyed the most utter repose short of death itself."

Long dormant recollections of early days in Dublin were awakened. Mingled emotions filled him as some old members of his Burschen Club, with barely recognisable visages, stalked or tottered past—some of them vicars-general, others law-advisers.

He visited the courts, where men he remembered as jesters figured as judges, not looking so happy at the change as gratitude should have made them.* It was during this visit to Dublin that Lever successfully inquired after and recovered the illuminated book, meerschaum, muster-roll, and other insignia of the Burschenschaft, which he brought away with him, and

* "Lever, during this visit," writes Mr. Innes, "was much annoyed on hearing the constant remark that the national character of Irishmen had utterly changed. The famine years, it was said, had sobered and saddened them. 'It may appear so to a stranger,' Lever said, 'but it is their notion of politeness to be dull with the dullards, and prosy with the prosers.' An incident in a trial for breach of promise furnished him with an illustration. The lady received large damages from a Galway admirer, and Lever was within hearing when she descended from the witness-table into the arms of a female relative. 'My dear, you must have been terribly put out by that savage's impertinent questions.' 'The devil a bit,' was the reply. Lever's delight at the answer was excessive. 'It was the genuine product of the soil,' he said: 'wild sports of the west before us as well as in the past.'"—Letter of H. Innes, April 20, 1879.

afterwards dropped some tears over in his exile on the dreary Dalmatian coast. "I never experience the same lightness of heart, the same capacity for enjoyment, the same readiness to employ whatever faculties I possess, as in Ireland; and as I walked through the old courts of Trinity, I felt a thrill through me as though thirty hard years of struggle and conflict were no more than a troubled ocean, and that there I stood, as ready for heaven knows what of fun or frolic, of freshman's folly and hot youth's wild gaiety, as when I lived yonder, over there, at No. 2 Chambers, with Frank —— for my chum, and the junior Dean over my head."

James Sheridan Lefanu he met frequently during this visit. Years previously he had known him as the author of "Torlogh O'Brien;" but the power evinced by some more recent stories from his pen made Lefanu a truly formidable competitor, and Lever, more than once, was urged to look to his laurels. Lefanu, some time after, was at first a little puzzled on hearing from Lever to the following effect:—

"I cannot wait for the end of the month, and the end of your story, to tell you of a very serious blunder you have made in it—a mistake perhaps more palpable to myself, than to many of your readers; but which, recognised or not, is still grave. Your blunder was in not holding back your novel some twelve or fifteen years, for you will never beat it—equal it you may, but not pass it. It is first-rate, and I feel assured it will have a high success.

"The two women are beautifully drawn, and the touches of nature in your blackest characters attract the sympathy of the reader to individuals, who if handled by an inferior artist, would have repelled by their cold rascality. In this day of serial deluge, one is driven to hourly comparisons; and I tell you frankly, that at my fire-side you carry off the palm from all competitors. One number that fell due last failed, and was a general lament among us. Though I said it will be hard for you to beat 'Wylder's Hand,' by all means try, at all events. Write on and write fast. I am sure that the imaginative faculty is never the better for lying fallow, and if you be able to falsify my prediction and do a greater work, none of your friends will be more rejoiced than myself."

His hours flew happily in Dublin. He declares that he is truly sorry to leave it; a sort of lurking fear oppresses him that he is looking at "that old college park for the last time." *

In London he found his society courted by men who were not without previous prejudice against "the noise and glare" of the traditional but misrepresented Irishman. An influential journalist, in the year 1872, spoke of "the many *convives* in this metropolis who remember the inexhaustible fund of anecdote, the prodigality of fun with which he beguiled the dinner-table. Great and brilliant talkers whom he encountered

* "En Voyage." Part ii. Act I. Blackwood, part xvii. p. 206.

at such boards as those of Lord Houghton * or Lord Lytton, 'still stood, hushed, to hear' story after story as it rushed from Lever's lips, and made Curran or Grattan, or life in Dublin at the time Waterloo was young, familiar to his charmed hearers. It was after one of these dinners, during which he told with rapid but distinct utterances, innumerable stories about Curran, all of surpassing excellence, that a famous *raconteur* exclaimed, 'It is no good opening one's mouth in Lever's presence—he puts other talkers down as a prairie fire rolls over and extinguishes a camp-fire.' " †

"He dined well and talked freely," writes one of those who were snuffed out. "The best *mots* were to be heard here—Lord Houghton himself by no means inactive, and whispering, in reference to a lady, fair only in her own eyes, who bragged that she had many men at her feet, 'chiropodists!'"

"Lever's accent," observes Major D——, "was *au fond* Dublinian, but not at any time very decidedly Irish; it was, however, not to be mistaken."

To the upholders of the theory that "speech is silver, but silence is gold," it will seem strange that a man who wrote and spoke so much made so few mistakes. Some one has said that a talker wields words

* Lord Houghton writes to us on July 16, 1877: "Although I sought every opportunity of meeting him, I was not often successful. I knew no man whose society was more uniformly agreeable, and I should have been very glad to have known him better. I have never heard anything but good of him, even from his literary contemporaries, which is a good deal to say of any man."

† The *Daily Telegraph*, No. 5298.

so easily that he is apt to forget their hidden power. "Fitly spoken, they fall like the sunshine, or the dew; but when unfitly, like the frost, the hail, and the desolating tempest." Dickens, though reserved in society, had less tact with tongue. "I took a lady down to dinner," he writes, "and talking to her about the Bishop of Durham's nepotism in the matter of Mr. Cheese, I found she was Mrs. Cheese; and I expatiated to the member for Marylebone, Lord Fermoy, conceiving him to be an Irish member, on the contemptible character of the Marylebone constituency and representation." Into awkwardnesses of this sort Lever never fell.

The manner in which his voice in festive hours usually crept to ascendancy, and at last trumpet-tongued proclaimed victory, has thus been noted by one who watched: "He would throw in some remark, which attracted all. In a moment he found himself master of the situation, and away he went." He would then do what others would hardly have attempted. That he should have charmed the audience of an English dinner-table, and held them spell-bound by an irresistible flood of Curran's *mots*, probably surprised no one more than himself. "If there be men clever enough now-a-days," he writes, "to say smart things, they are too clever to say them. The world we live in prefers placidity to brilliancy; and a man like Curran, in our present day society, would be as unwelcome as a pyrotechnist with a pocketful of squibs."

As great an epicure in talk as in diet, he urged that

to the Civil Service Commission should be added an examination for diners-out! How he appeared to such good advantage in West End society is strange; for his heart would seem to have been but half in it. His impressions of this particular visit have been recorded in *Blackwood*:—"London was as new to me, just as noisy, as confounding, as addling, as exciting, as tantalising, and never satisfying, as when first I saw it, thirty years ago."

They who lounge in Rotten Row, he said, know very little of the overwhelming excitement produced on one who lives the dreary life of Italian do-nothingness by the mere sights and sounds of London; nor could they measure the mingled confusion and enjoyment of him who hears more in half an hour than he had imagined in half a year. He would be well pleased if "fortune permitted him now and then to visit this marvellous place for a week or so, to cross over the great bridges, lounge in its parks, eat its fish dinners, hear a good debate in the House, or, better still, *listen* to a good dinner conversation, such as I have heard many lately."

Lever to the end failed not to profit by the lesson which Crampton and Sheehan had taught him—namely, to indulge less in monologue and learn to listen.

In the calm seclusion of Spezzia his thoughts would often wander through the narrow and at times tortuous path of bygone days; and once more, in "Tony Butler," published in 1865, we find him recurring to it. Since the "Knight of Gwynne" he had not utilised his im-

pressions of Derry scenes endeared by early ardour and honest toil. "Tony" appeared anonymously, and as a three-volume novel.

It is amusing to read the reviews which analytically sought to trace the authorship. The *Athenæum* (No. 1944) noticed it as "an unsuccessful attempt to combine the Irish novel of Lever with the later romance of Lytton: the reader is alternately reminded of 'Harry Lorrequer' and 'The Caxtons;' but the imitations, considered separately, do not afford satisfaction, and the combination of the two incongruous styles is an inartistic patchwork. The writer uses a ready pen, but 'Tony Butler,'" it was suggested, might have been his "first attempt in prose fiction. In a certain sense the work may be commended for cleverness; it contains flashes of pleasantry, scraps of effective description, and happy indications of character." Lever's incompetence to judge his own productions is proved anew by a passage in this review. "Major McCaskey," he wrote, "is not a foreground figure in this our story; nor have we any reason to suppose that he possesses any attractions for our readers." "How blind," exclaimed the critic, "are some artists to the play which they are themselves creating for the amusement of others. Not only is the noisy, impudent military adventurer the most piquant and attractive figure of the book, but he is unquestionably the foreground figure of the book. He altogether eclipses Tony Butler, the hero." This youth, brought up by a widowed mother in a wild Irish county, and

locally famous for his thick head, becomes at last a Queen's Messenger, and talks in the style of a young man who, after a course of Eton or Harrow, has borne away the honours of Oxford.

To suggestions from critics and publishers he usually lent a ready ear. One of the latter guild is told, "If you wish the book longer, I am ready to add the stuff. For any elucidation, explanation, or any other 'ation' save d——n, I am quite ready!" He greatly disliked a reticent publisher. He said that, having no other indication of Dublin or London feeling than his bookseller, it was the devil to have a publisher who won't say his mind—a clock that had neither dial nor strike-weight!

But he hated accounts. Once, when his publishers furnished them, he said, with Tony Lumpkin, that "they were all buz to him." Anything like business proved eminently irksome to him, and often he declared that it was only on un-realities he could ever exercise his brains. Booksellers generally treated him well; but some serials and newspapers did not always do so, which led him to say that such things were successes only by starving the people who contribute to them. No such symptom, however, was suggested by his own appearance at this time. He had now developed into marked obesity. He sat for his portrait, and was "flabberghasted" by the result. In presenting his photograph to Major D—— in 1865, he remarked that Time had dealt hardly with him; but it was not face alone, but the whole nature that had been crushed and wrenched.

This speech—uttered during one of those periods of reaction which from boyhood periodically seized Lever—throws light on the reasons which led him, on July 1, 1865, to write his will. By the outer world he was now regarded as at his prime. In society rays of sunshine lit his face, and clouds seemed never to darken his thought. Steadily his star appeared in the ascendant. Men regarded him as at the zenith of his social powers. Graver duty discharged, he proceeded to satisfy his mind on points to which he seemed to pleasantly attach importance:—"What progress socialities were making. How about dinners—was the cooking better? Was conversation more brilliant? Were the talkers wittier? Were the *entrées* hotter? Was opinion more moderate—expression neater—banter more refined?" But other and greater changes were in operation—riveting his watchful eye as they revolved—matters for a Blue Book rather than for our page. Dyspepsia and its penalties, the besetting ill of most authors, scowled not on him. When Eupepsia held its silver sway, all was bland and beatific.

He was a fish-eater, and is constantly telling us so in his books. Fish is a food largely charged with phosphorus; and this diet no doubt supplied the phosphorus which physiologists tell us men engaged in laborious brain-work give out by the effort. Dickens, when utterly exhausted, found, as he tells us, oysters a powerful restorative.

Moore noted the involuntary peculiarities which have

marked our great men—some of them scratching their heel while talking. It was remarked that Lever, after one of his best stories, would often rapidly move his mouth, as if engaged in the deglutition of some delicious morsel; others interpreted this involuntary movement as impatience to resume his stories, while in courtesy he was constrained to listen to others.

Sir Hamilton Seymour is of opinion—himself one of the best *raconteurs*—that Lever, as a story-teller, appeared to far greater advantage at table than he even did in his books. The same has been said by Lockhart of Theodore Hook. We believe it was Sir Hamilton who said to Lever, after he had been writing for near thirty years, "It is your best wares you have never brought to market. Try if you couldn't write that anecdote just as you have told it to me." "Ah!" soliloquised Lever, "that is the real difficulty. No, there's no doing the thing in that fashion; all the ingenious contrivances that ever were invented never imparted to the corked-up flask of Vichy or Carlsbad the invigorating freshness of the waters as they bubbled and sparkled from the fountain."

The result of the hint, and of the thought it aroused, was those happy personal jottings by Cornelius O'Dowd, which possess a value and interest never heretofore adequately recognised. In this book we have Lever in as thorough truthful confidence with his reader, as though it were a *tête-à-tête* by his own fireside. He began those sketches, he said, pretty much as some drawing-room

musician is persuaded by his friends to go on the stage, assured that the soft cadences that charmed the polite circle of his acquaintance would find favour with the public.

In "Cornelius O'Dowd," as in previous books, he sought to level abuses; but badinage was made to do the work of bludgeoning; and delicate irony sapped foundations to which a coarser hand would have applied the crowbar. The title at least seems to have been borrowed from a forgotten performance. Father Prout excited great interest by an attempt to prove that Moore's best pieces were taken without acknowledgment from antique sources. An honest effort to show that another Cornelius O'Dowd, in 1776, narrated his confessions and gave his opinion upon things in general, ought to prove of more legitimate interest.*

* In the ephemeral pages of a scarce Dublin print called the *Hibernian Journal, or Chronicle of Liberty*, published in December, 1776, will be found the "Tour of Cornelius O'Dowd," with an "Introductory Chapter"—marked by humour not unlike Lever's own. "Tour writing is the fashion; and why should I be out of it? To be out of the fashion is as bad as being out of the world; and a man under that circumstance looks as awkward as a sow with one ear, or a jug with a broken handle. But that I may be read with some satisfaction, it may be necessary to give an account of myself by way of preface, for some author, whose name I have forgot, has said in one of his works, but which of them I cannot remember, that Prefaces are become so common, that I wonder there is not one to a horn-book; and indeed, like women's faces, they are often the most inviting portion of the whole workmanship." Stirring adventures and portraits graphically illustrative of the time follow, including that of a swain "with a tambour waistcoat; a green coat with oval buttons; a *couteau de chasse* by his side; a fore-top to his hair as high as the feathers on a hearse horse's head; and a queue behind as thick as the stem of a six-year oak plant."

A paper contributed to *Blackwood* after his return to Italy resumes the story of his life and thoughts:—"When I had got back over the Alps, my first care was to seek out some quiet spot, wherein I might meditate over all I had so lately seen and heard, and, what was fully as important to me, bring my mind back to those routine ways of thought which constitute, at the same time, the labour and the happiness of my life."

He returned to Italy braced with resolution to strain every muscle and sinew of his mind.

"'Yes,' said I, 'I will heat both boilers, and get full steam up, and the world shall see at last the speed that is in me;' and down I went to my little bay. I know not how it may be with other people, but to myself there is a wonderful charm in beginning anything. There is a smack of youthfulness about the idea of a fair start that is wonderfully captivating. I enjoy my soup at dinner with not merely the relish due to its own flavour, but with a foretaste of joys to come. I glory in the first burst and the first fence in a hunting-field. The first squall that sends my boat gunwale under, gives me a thrill of mingled ecstasy and fear, more exquisitely exciting than a whole day's experiences of escape and peril. The mere fact of beginning, therefore, sent its sense of enjoyment through me, though not fully certain upon what topic I was about to amuse or instruct."

The result was "Sir Brook Fossbrooke," published by Mr. Blackwood. It showed creative power, a dramatic faculty, and an insight into human nature. The story

opens much in his old style, with a picture of military life in Dublin, "than which there is not a pleasanter place in the world, despite some drawbacks in the matter of guard-mounting and field-days." To a friend he said, "'Sir Brook Fossbrooke' is the most carefully written of my works. The old Judge is a portrait on which I expended a great deal of time and paint."

The spot which he chose for work was "one of those lonely nooks, a cleft between the mountains, widening as you enter into a bay, watered by the blue sea, and sheltered by foliage of every shape and colour, from the oak to the olive." This lonely nook adjoined one of the smaller bays, opening from the Gulf of Spezzia. Here, with brain well nurtured, his imagination teeming with fertility, he threw forth fruit.*

To the last "Sir Brook Fossbrooke" continued his favourite, though with readers it never enjoyed popularity. Presenting a copy to Mr. Palmer some years after, his words are: "The very flattering things you have said of some performances of mine, embolden me to ask your acceptance of a volume somewhat better than its brethren, and certainly better than I am like to do again."

"One of Lever's daughters," observes a kinswoman, "inherited much of his literary taste and talent; but although some things she wrote sufficiently indicated this gift, he strongly urged her against publishing them,

* A visit to Lever's villa, in autumn, 1878, has found it much changed. Its privacy has been invaded and its beauty destroyed by being built into by the new Dockyards. The boatmen remember him with affection, and on his name being mentioned, flew into enthusiastic ebullitions.

and uniformly expressed a hope, that she might never embark in a literary career. He himself was often disposed to regret that he had not followed medicine in preference to letters; which he said was the mistake of his life."

It was about this time that a very strong appeal was renewed to allow himself to be put in nomination as member for the University of Dublin. His brother, one of the most retiring of men, had not been favourable to the notion, and addressed a long letter to Mr. Spencer on the subject. Lever himself, though at first tempted, was finally of opinion that he could be more usefully employed in the sphere of action to which his natural bias led him. Dickens was also besought to enter Parliament in 1869, and declined very much for the same reasons. Lever said that, just as Johnson called patriotism the last refuge of a scoundrel, Parliament had well nigh become the last resource of incapacity. "What fatal tendency of our age inclines men to adopt a career in all respects unsuited to them?" he asked. "When Pitt said of our octogenarian Generals, 'I don't know what effect they produce on the enemy, but I know that they frighten *me*,' he expressed what I very strongly feel about these small boys of politics—they fill me with fear and misgiving." Mr. Innes, it will be remembered, assigns further reasons, which led Lever to relinquish the Parliamentary project.

But a cause far graver than that assigned by Lever no doubt chained down an ambition at one time willing enough to vault. "I am old and broken," he said to

Major D—— in 1865, "though working on still, for I can't afford rest. My whole life's labour has been lost to me by a misfortune."

He sometimes sought honey near the spot where stings had fallen. "Ought I not to be happy," he said, "to find an audience composed of the sons and grandsons, and, what I like better, the daughters and granddaughters of those who once listened to 'Harry Lorrequer'?" Lever was offered strong introductions to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Eglinton, previously famous for his gorgeous tournament, but the glare of a satrap had lost its charm for him. From his successors he also held aloof.

Pleasanter it was to write for "St. Paul's" under Anthony Trollope. In 1868 appeared "The Confessions of Paul Gosslet in Love, War, and the Civil Service. My first Mission under F.O." People were puzzled as to the authorship, and it is the work of Lever's perhaps the least known. Mr. Trollope, in characteristic and interesting words, has been kind enough to give us some impressions of his co-novelist.

"Charles Lever was an intimate friend of mine whom I very dearly loved, but I do not know that I can tell you any details that will serve the purpose of your book.

"Of all the clever men I have known, his wit was the readiest. In conversation he was the quickest goer and the best stager I ever knew, never failing even in ill health, never showing sign of weariness after any labour. But all that is simply my feeling of the man. I had

many letters from him, as he wrote for a Magazine which I edited, but I never kept one. Though he lived always in Italy, with short intervals in London, he never dropped his Irish manner or his Irish tongue. In literature it was peculiar to him to have altogether changed his manner and tone, from the time of 'Harry Lorrequer' to that of 'Tony Butler,' and to have been quite at home and quite successful in each. He became attached to the Conservative party; but yet I doubt whether he had any strong political feeling. His was a kind friendly nature, prone to cake and ale, and resolved to make the best of life when, as you no doubt know, things were often very sad with him." *

Why did Lever give no public readings from his books? Their excitation would have held at bay the subtle approach of morbid gloom. His early shyness,—the chain which often shackles men of mark, had dropped from him. He was, in fact, just the man for oral flow. Sir Hamilton Seymour said of Lever that as a writer he was simply nowhere in comparison with Lever the talker. "Write that as you have told it," he once said to him. It was not so easy, however. "The pleasant freedom of the voice, the union of cadence and gesture, the spontaneity that comes of self-reliance as one feels his success—where are these," asked Lever, "in presence of your ink-bottle and your foolscap?"

Though his appearance in advanced life might tend to disenchant them, his admirers would soon find that in

* Letter of Anthony Trollope, Esq., London. March 24, 1879.

dramatic art and elocutionary strength Lever was not second to Dickens.* Lever had a grand opportunity of making a hit and a fortune in this way, but we are not aware that the idea ever seriously occurred to him.

Sir Thomas Watson traced to the excitation attending these displays the paralysis of Dickens. But the equally prolific Lever, who never gave readings, incurred the same subtle stroke. Possibly, had he read publicly and shared the glow of Dickens' life, his own might not have ebbed away as it did. The elixir of society seems to have been as essential to his nature as aliment to the body; and we know that during his long expatriation he failed to find as much social intercourse as his nature craved. In 1869 he bemoans the death, at Trieste, of "his one friend, Möring." Can we doubt that he was, so to speak, starved to death? It will be seen that minor cares were soon over-ridden by heavy woe, whose hoof beat down his heart.

* "No author," observes Charles Reade, "has ever left a fortune made by writing. Dickens, the sole exception, was a reader and a publisher."

In Dublin the readings of Dickens had been specially successful. "You can hardly imagine it," he writes, "All the way from the Hotel to the Rotunda (a mile) I had to contend against the stream of people who were turned away. When I got there, they had broken the glass in the pay-boxes, and were offering £5 freely for a stall. Half of my platform had to be taken down, and people heaped in among the ruins. You never saw such a scene." (Life, iii., p. 201.) And again, "They had offered frantic prices for stalls. Eleven bank-notes were thrust into a pay box at one time for eleven stalls. Our men were flattened against walls, and squeezed against beams. Ladies stood all night with their chins against my platform. Other ladies sat all night upon my steps. We turned away people enough to make immense houses for a week." Lever lost a great chance in not giving readings.

"The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly" came out in the *Cornhill* at this time, and was published by Smith & Elder. Lever now, almost for the first time, succeeded in producing an elaborate plot, the mystery of which was so astutely veiled, that, although simple and natural enough, the reader finds himself at last quite taken by surprise. Formerly his effort had been to make his characters wonderful heroes at the mess and in the saddle; and critical readers, while now remarking that he seemed desirous of getting rid of his old stud of hobby-horses, dryly hoped that it was not because he felt himself growing too old, or them too fresh for a veteran to ride. Lever meant to tell in an historic introduction which he did not live to write, that "Bishop's Folly," is a wonderful castle near Coleraine, built by the eccentric Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry, and now occupied by Sir Hervey Bruce.

"That Boy of Norcott's"—born within some months of "The Bramleighs"—despite its juvenility of title furnished another illustration of Mr. Pecksniff's remark, that time would tame the ardour of a playful bird. With the exception of a sledge ride through Hungary, we find hardly a more exciting adventure in the career of the "boy" from cradle to manhood—a career, therefore, more true to nature than the headlong escapades of Lever's earlier heroes. A paper now before us lets us into the secret of the circumstances which led to this change. "I have grave doubts if age has anything heavier in all its inflictions than the yearly increasing difficulty

of enjoying a good laugh. For my own part, baldness, adiposity, and such like are all lighter evils to me than the gravity I feel stealing over me, the little tolerance I have for small fun, and the growing conviction that the pleasant people have gone home, and that I am left to walk back with the dreary ones."

With the latter "That Boy of Norcott's" must be classed. Irresolution in guidance marks the author's conduct of his hero; and its plot exhibits the defect so often noticed by his early censor, McGlashan, of being "huddled up." By way of excuse for one of those abrupt endings, he told a friend that his bookseller wanted a book for Christmas; he himself wished to have done with it; and so between them they had put the characters to bed without tying their night-caps, and blowing out the candle before they were well in.

The "Rent in a Cloud"—a short one—if really Lever's, was unworthy of him; but our pen shall not be the one to point out its faults. As soon might we assail Thucydides because the eighth book of the "Peloponnesian War" is as feeble as the earlier ones exhibit strength. Scott is not the less great because he wrote "Castle Dangerous;" and "Pericles" ought not to weaken Shakspeare's fame. As regards the reputed performance of Thucydides, some have ascribed it to his daughter; and a similar conjecture may perhaps apply to the "Rent in a Cloud."

CHAPTER X.

Consul at Trieste—A Leap in the Dark—The Dreary Dalmatian Coast—Excessive Somnolence—A dissolving view of Ireland—Guest for three days of the Viceroy—Lord Spencer Charmed—Anecdotes and Conversations—Recollections of Lever by his Niece, Judge Keogh, Bishop Graves, Dr. Shaw, Mr. Dicey, Dr. Stokes, Sir William Wilde, Major D—— and others—The Cosmopolitan Club—Lord Lytton—Deceived by the Tichborne Claimant.

In 1867, on the reaccession of the Conservative party to power, some of Lever's friends remarked to Mr. Whiteside, then member for the University of Dublin, and afterwards Lord Chief Justice, that as his office was that of Vice-consul only, a deal of drudgery devolved on him. The matter was represented to the Government, and the late Lord Derby said, "We certainly must do something for Harry Lorrequer."* Lever soon after, namely, on March the 2nd, 1867, was appointed to a consulship at Trieste, where it was alleged he would have nothing but the *otium cum dignitate*, a vice-consul doing all the work for him. The office

* A courteous letter from the Chief Justice inviting us to call upon him "in Chamber," led to the communication of much interesting matter. In dedicating "One of Them" to this personage, Lever remarked that "of all the friends he could count in Ireland from whom space and the accidents of life had separated him, there was not 'one of them' for whom he entertained a sincerer regard united with higher hopes."

was indeed one of some dignity; Sir John Crampton of diplomatic celebrity speaks of it in a letter to us, as a "Consul-Generalship."

Lord Derby in tendering the appointment used these characteristic words, "Here is £600 a-year for doing nothing; and you, Lever, are the very man to do it." The Premier knew that this "nothing" was the very thing which thousands of readers wished, and there was not one cynic to find fault with the £600 a-year which figured in the Estimates; the "nothing" was, in fact, stupendous work, and it was quaintly remarked, that every year the House voted the sum, it wrote an undying chapter of Irish History.*

Lever's nature changed as he grew older. Time was when, if aught went wrong around him, he would still be like Mark Tapley, "jolly." In 1865 he proudly avows an indomitable belief in Self. His early life was marked by a modest and retiring mien. His letters from 1838 to 1855, confess rather a mistrust of his own

* Grave statesmen who supported the estimates to buy guns for our national defences regarded Lever's subsidy in an equally important light. Dibdin received a large pension for promoting by his spirited sea-songs enlistment in the navy. Lever did still more to make the British army attractive, and had he got £1600 a year instead of £600, it would be less than he deserved and earned. The letter sent by a grateful mother, after the publication of "O'Malley," and confessing its effect on the martial bias of her son, will be remembered. His pen, indeed, made more dragoons than all the recruiting sergeants in her Majesty's service, and, it was well observed by an American critic that, "A spirit of martial enthusiasm inflated the minds of the rising generation, until to be a dragoon became a day-dream of existence, and many an embryo warrior who failed in obtaining a commission, compromised with a cruel destiny by accepting the Queen's shilling."

powers, and evince a strong desire to be guided by friendly counsel. Those who have read his later letters will at once see that the views he expressed behind the mask of O'Dowd, are quite autobiographic. His retirement furnished him with too many facilities for brooding, and we find traces of this habit in the closing record of his thoughts; some final contributions to *Blackwood* being called "Grumbles." One of these papers declared that he had a whole rookery of crows to pluck with destiny.

Lord Derby took credit to himself for giving a consular appointment to Lever; but his able contemporary, Lord Palmerston, viewed all offices of that character with feelings akin to contempt. The latter statesman, who said that tenant-right meant landlord-wrong, told the usual half-truth in declaring that when a man fails through life, he holds himself fit for a consulship.

Lever wrote to Major D—— in December, 1868, that he accepted Trieste as a great boon, but found it one of the dreariest, dullest, and vulgarest dens in Europe, without even that resource one had in the Austria of yore—of a gentlemanlike class in the higher beaurocracy, and the soldiers in command—all was canting and communistic; he abhorred the place, he said, and himself for coming to it. Over and over the same sad confession is made. Sometimes he calls it a famous fiasco, at other times, a leap in the dark.

And was this the end of that grand old day-dream, "that some time or other," as he writes, "I was to

chance upon a certain spot so lovely, so beautiful, so satisfying in all the requirements of scenery and tranquillity, so full of natural beauty, and so removed from all intrusive boredom, that I was to do I know not what wonderful things, not merely better than what I had yet done, but far and away above what any one suspected me capable of; for, of course, I could not have been before the world thirty years without the fervent conviction that I was only half understood, half appreciated"?

At Trieste he chewed the cud of sweet and bitter, the latter, unfortunately, predominating. Here, as he tells Major D——, he celebrated his sixty-third birthday gloomily, and like Job, rather disposed to hate the day a man-child was born!

The spring of 1868 found him unable to do aught but nurse his poor wife, who grew weaker and weaker and her suffering more acute. He described himself disabled by watching and anxiety—he had engagements and work to do, but could not do it—a thought even harder than not to be able to find employment; for it sent the canker back into a man's own heart, and made him regard himself as exhausted and worn out. One more turn of work out of his tired brain was, he said, the most he could hope for ere he finished; but he really desired that peace which avoids discussion as to one's writings—that wearisome enquiry as to "whether you are growing better or growing worse—showing new signs of vitality, or living on the memory of past successes." He added, that life, after five-and-thirty, was very poor fun, if it

were even pleasant up to that; but the run home after a man had turned the corner of middle age was unmitigated dreariness. On the whole, however, he bore his trials philosophically—using bitters just as a man would tonics—in order to purify and strengthen a shattered system.

Trieste, the most important seaport owned by Austria, stands on the Adriatic, whose entire trade it grasps; but this enterprise extends not only to the Mediterranean and Black Sea, but to the Norwegian, Spanish, French, Belgian, and American ports as well.

"Lever's life ebbed away on the dreary Dalmatian coast," writes Mr. Dicey, "in an out-of-the-way city." The same, we may remark, where Richard Cœur-de-Lion was imprisoned. Indeed, so many drawbacks exist to the prejudice of Trieste, that one must regard it as an eminently dull place, whose very name seems suggestive of a depressing French word. Its blank walls and narrow streets—mostly inaccessible to carriages of any kind—are at times swept and scourged by the ruthless Bora, so powerful that people may lean against it and be upheld by it, while, if not on the watch, they may find themselves next minute blown into the canal by its violence! The caprice of the climate is most irksome: two antagonistic winds constantly struggle for the mastery, the oppressive Sirocco, and the cruel Bora. Intense heat and piercing cold alternately hold sway. Lever complained that this heat greatly relaxed him. He described it at 92° in what by courtesy was called "the shade." His daughter Sydney was confined to bed by

sunstroke, and the remainder of his little household suffered from the overpowering discomforts of the weather.

In point of fact, Trieste is utterly deficient in shade. The small grove called the Boschetto solely affords that luxury. The languages spoken form a very Babel. The peasantry use a Slavonic patois. Italian is heard in all courts of justice, and in the public offices German; but innumerable dialects are spoken—to say nothing of the grunting of "St. Anthony's Swine," as they pursue their privileged course through Trieste. This clangour of tongues is not to be wondered at when we know that the inhabitants are a motley race to which every part of the globe has sent its contingents. The citizens comprise Italians, Dalmatians, Germans, Jews, Greeks, Armenians, Yankees, and others. The trade of Trieste is great, but few travellers are attracted thither unless by tyrant business.

Though Lever does not say so, it must be confessed that the mixed character of its people formed a feature of some attraction from the variety and grotesqueness of their costume, but of late the importation of cheap clothes from England has spoiled this once picturesque panorama.

Trieste was in every way ruinously dear. Its women he described as finer and fairer than any to be seen in Paris. If his womankind, he said, dressed like the people of the place, all his means would not suffice. Two good things were certainly to be found at Trieste. Maraschino—made from the marasca cherry—

was its special product; and in that great fish market, largely fed from the Mediterranean, he found in perfection his favourite phosphorescent food.

Just as Dickens turned himself inside out to Forster (his own phrase), Lever unbosomed his whole soul to D——. He begged the Major to write to him. It was the best thing old friends had, that they could interchange their thoughts with a frankness, and a certainty of being well understood, that newer friendship scarcely aspired to. As to literary work, his home anxieties were too great to permit it, and, though never given to anything like application, utter idleness, he added, depressed him greatly, not to speak of other ills which attended it.

At last these home anxieties received relief. The Trieste doctors operated upon his wife for ovarian disease, with such seeming success that Lever declared if the result should be radical, he would bless the day they came there.

The Adriatic too, ceased to be an irksomely suggestive name from the day that his gifted daughter Sidney met Mr. Crafton Edgar Smith, an opulent merchant, and genial man long connected with that great gulf of communication between Cape St. Mary and Trieste. Their marriage proved a happy one, and he has recently taken by Royal Licence, the name of Lever.

The later jottings of "Cornelius O'Dowd," a book generally regarded as better than any of his novels—were written under difficulties. "I am still very shaky," he tells his cousin Harry Innes on the 10th of January,

1869, "and if you have curiosity to see my last will and testament, look at the 'O'Dowd' in next month's 'Blackwood.'" February, 1870, found a severe cough racking his chest and destroying his sleep. He told Major D—— that it required eighteen hours out of the twenty-four and strong stimulants for the remainder to enable him to write. The inroad on his natural rest had an evil influence on him.

"Kilgobbin" was now in hand, written under even harder circumstances than "O'Dowd." He wrote to D—— that he was breaking up very fast; an old mischief in the prostate gland had taken the shabby advantage of him in his advanced years, and he discovered there was no statute of limitation against a decrease of the kidneys. He had a great dread of living on as a sick man, but no reluctance whatever to go at once. Indeed, even by an effort of ingenuity he could not invent a reason for lingering longer. "The hearse," he sadly added, "was the only coach one couldn't call, however eager to drive home."

"Politics, 'tis said, tend to file the soul out of a man." Their free introduction into "Kilgobbin" did not serve to revive him. D——, the man who narrowly observed him from youth, and studied him to the last, writes:—

"He was a politician, although not by any means a deep-thinking one. He was essentially a Dublin politician. All his late writings were political in their colour, which was that of the last ten or fifteen years of the Irish Parliament. His heroes and heroines belonged

nearly all to the Anglo-Irish races. To the native Irish was left the subordinate sphere of jesters, jarveys, and ballad-singers. I suggested to him more than once the propriety of making a trial with the old families of Irish or Norman Irish race. I peopled a castle in Kerry for him with a descendant of real Irish chiefs, surrounded by French abbés, Spanish and Austrian soldiers of fortune, political agents of various kinds, and I asked him to bring into contact with these a genuine English gentleman on the one hand, and a representative of the Anglo-Irish settlers on the other. This suggestion was made years ago, and some confused image of it seems to have floated uppermost by chance, and from his having been brought into contact with Austrian officers at Florence and Trieste, in 'Lord Kilgobbin,' the earlier chapters of which may be found in the 'Cornhill.' "*

The original of one of these portraits was the Duke de Nedentorz, a very gallant soldier, second in command at Trieste. Möring, a field marshal and an old friend of Major D——'s, an able and distinguished man, was, luckily for Lever, stationed at Trieste also. In February, 1870, Lever expressed fears that Austria was about to make a Cabinet Minister of Möring, and deprive Trieste of the one gentleman it possessed. Lever was, as Major D—— says, essentially a politician. In the marvellously full correspondence between him and Mr. Chapman — still preserved — the letters, though ostensibly on business connected with his books, all

* Letter of Major D—— to the author, August the 19th, 1875.

digress into fluent commentary on the politics of the hour. He had often throughout his career aspired to become a political journalist, and no doubt he would have distinguished himself in this *rôle*. Thirty years previously that shrewd man, the Rev. John Lever, recognized his brother's *forte*, and praised a political paper in the "Dublin University Magazine," for November 1841, as terse, sharp, and to the purpose. He hoped that Charles would keep up to this new line without slacking his hand on the other. "It promises fairly for future usefulness, and a name higher than 'Harry Lorrequer.'" John, however, never urged him to embark in journalism, preferring, as he uniformly did, that Charles Lever, M.D., should stick to his profession. In phraseology, at least, he continued medical to the last. Heavy losses and increasing expenses led Lever to try his hand once more at thrift; but it was all to no use, and he at last aoandoned the effort as vain.

"There are temperaments," he writes, "which thrift disagrees with, just as there are constitutions which cannot take opium or digitalis, or a score of other medicaments that others profit by. Mine, I say it in all humility, is one of them. The agent that acts so favourably with others, goes wrong with me. Something or other has been omitted in my temperament, or something has been mixed up with it that ought not to have been there; I cannot tell which. Whatever it be, it renders me incapable of practising that sage and well-regulated economy by which other men secure themselves

against difficulties, and 'show a surplus' in their annual balance-sheet."

One hundred a year in addition to his consular salary was allowed to defray the rent of an office, in which, unlike that at Spezzia, a good share of business was done. He described his only Vice-Consul—that at Turin—as aged eighty and very shaky. Free from the too frequent weakness of men "dressed in a little brief authority," we learn from the *Era* (No. 1759) that "in his official capacity Mr. Lever won the affection and esteem of all who came in contact with him." One day, about this time, a strange change came over Lever; a feeling of delicious langour, often degenerating into somnolency, usurped the place of legitimate enjoyment and healthy energy. In 1869, the following paragraph went the rounds of the press. "Charles Lever has lapsed into a state of lethargy, which causes him to sleep eighteen hours out of the twenty-four." This was, no doubt, an expiring effort of nature, and those who have watched his previous life will have observed different efforts of the same "soft nurse" to assert her sway. To Hayman, so far back as 1844, he speaks of a feeling of somnolence, following bad headaches which then tormented him. Physiologists have repeatedly proclaimed that those who do the most brain-work require the most sleep. It is a recuperative agent of vast power, and the greatest men are known to have been the greatest sleepers, while those who died of necrencephalus, or softening of the brain, had generally

stinted themselves in sleep—Archbishop Magee, a noted example, having, as his biographer tells, abridged his night's rest to four hours, at the very time when his cerebral toil was hardest. There can be no doubt that the sudden smash of Dickens was due to want of sleep.* Refreshed by this great effort of nature, we find Lever soon after arranging to revisit Ireland, to renew acquaintance with old friends and partly to restock a note-book once plethoric enough, but showing signs of attenuation at last. Throughout his long exile from Ireland, daily viewing manners utterly unlike those presented by his favourite theatre, it seems wonderful how, without the exhilarative aliment of daily intercourse, his mind seemed always saturated in the sparkling dews of Ireland, and his books, to the last, so racy of its soil. How he managed to do this we learn from Professor Mahaffy.

"Lever told me that, though compelled by his duties to live abroad, he felt it an absolute necessity to revisit Ireland periodically, and have the tone of his mind refreshed by nights in Trinity College, or at the table of some old friends, who told him all the newest good things, and revived him with the music of the Irish brogue. He would recover strength Antæus-like, whenever he regained his mother earth."

Arrived in Ireland he was *fêted* and feasted, and it seemed that he had never flashed more brightly. Kind and gracious attention came not from old friends only. The Lord Lieutenant made him his guest for days at a

* Life of C. Dickens vol. iii. p. 281, *et passim.*

time, and by kindest attention put Lever completely at ease.

"When I was in Ireland" (writes his Lordship), "Lady Spencer and I had the pleasure of receiving Mr. Lever at the Viceregal Lodge, and were much charmed and entertained by him. If I recollect rightly, we did not previously know him. Miss Mary Boyle, a cousin of mine, knew Mr. Lever well; and Lady Spencer met him at her house after she saw him in Ireland." *

Many amusing traits were told to show the acumen of the race Lord Spencer ruled, and of that tendency to depreciate everything English older than the time of Swift, who said, "Burn everything which comes from England unless her coals."

"A friend of mine, when exploring Castle Howard, was accompanied by an Irish servant of the Micky Free stamp. 'This,' said he to the man, 'is Lord Carlisle's' —two Peers of that name had been Lords Lieutenant of Ireland. 'See what splendid trees—so tall—so stately.' 'Why wouldn't they be fine?' retorted the groom—'Shure, hadn't he the pick av the Phaynix Park?'

"I was dining with Judge —— on Sunday, who, as you know, is a very diminutive, shrivelled up man, and he told me an amusing story. When attorney-general, he purchased an estate in Tipperary, and in order to inspect his acquisition, was proceeding with his agent through a boreen, when he overheard an old crone say, 'That's the

* Letter from Earl Spencer dated Hurleston, Northampton, 1 June, 1877.

new landlord, that dawny little bit av a leprehaun! Begorra, the boys might as well be shootin' at a jacksnipe.'

"My friend, Dr. Beatty, with whom I had a bottle of Carlowitz last evening, told me not a bad thing. Christmas day was celebrated at his house by a plum-pudding of vast circumference; but the doctor missed the whiskey which he had given out to rob it of dyspeptic terrors. That night he taxed his cook with the omission, who naively replied, 'The puddin' and I tossed to see which should have the whiskey, and the puddin' lost.' In this way Lever's lips ran, delighting all who listened; but it was in gesture that his great strength lay."

A favoured few had access to his room at Morrison's Hotel, and one thus graphically describes what passed:—

"I found him seated at an open window; a bottle of claret at his right hand, and the proof-sheets of 'Lord Kilgobbin' before him. It was a beautiful morning borrowed from the month of May; the hawthorns in the College park were just beginning to bloom, and nature was young and warm and lovely. At the date of our visit, he looked a hale, hearty, laughter-loving man of sixty. There was mirth in his grey eye, joviality in the wink that twittered on his eyelid, saucy humour in his smile, and *bon mot*, wit, repartee, and rejoinder in every movement of his lips.* His hair, very thin, but

* The conversation that passed has been elsewhere given. It may be added, that a brilliant member of the demi-monde having cantered past, he said, "The *demi-monde* is like a decaying peach, one side seems sweet—but how repellent the other."

of a silky brown, fell across his forehead, and when it curtained his eyes, he would jerk back his head—this, too, at some telling crisis in a narrative, when the particular action was just the exact finish required to make the story perfect. Mr Lever's teeth were all his own and very brilliant, and whether from accident or habit, he flashed them on us in conjunction with his wonderful eyes—a battery at once powerful and irresistible.

"He spoke slowly at first, but warming to his work, and candying an idea in a short, contagious, musical laugh, his story told itself all too rapidly, and the light burned out with such a glare as to intensify the succeeding darkness. Like all good *raconteurs*, he addressed himself deferentially to his auditor in the beginning, and as soon as the fish was hooked, the attention enthralled, he would speak as if thinking aloud.

"Mr. Lever made great use of his hands, which were small and white, and delicate as those of a woman. He made play with them, threw them up in ecstasy, or wrung them in mournfulness, just as the action of the moment demanded. He did not require eyes or teeth with such a voice, and such hands: they could tell and illustrate the workings of his brain. He was somewhat careless in his dress, but clung to the traditional high shirt collar merely compromising the unswerving stock of the Brummell period. 'I stick to my Irish shoes,' he said, thrusting upwards about as uncompromising a 'bit of leather' as I have ever set eyes on right under my nose, 'and until a few years ago, I got them from

a descendant of the celebrated Count Lally, who cobbled at Letterkenny. There is no shoe in the world—or accent either—equal to Irish brogue.'"

This keen sketcher might have added that Lever plumed himself on the stand which he had made against the beard and moustache movement. No parish priest or ritualist parson was ever more cleanly shaved. Describing a nag which he had once been given to ride at Killarney, he said that it had "a back-bone with which one might shave himself—using the tail for a brush."

Of Doctors Stokes, Wilde, and Beatty—all since dead—he saw much. To Doctors Bigger and Tuohill, and to Rev. Chancellor Tisdall he paid farewell visits.*

He dined with his old friend, Alexander Spencer, who had known him as a tiny child in tunics; and in the evening he read aloud for Mrs. Spencer and her sons several chapters of "Lord Kilgobbin." Two young men then prosecuting their studies in Stephen's hospital, joined the party later. Early memories crowded to Lever's mind as he warmed towards them; and he remained until the small hours telling them stories of that joyous time.

* He also saw a good deal of his old schoolfellow Henry West, Esq., Q.C., whose recollections of Lever in our first volume will be remembered. "As I have told you the first story, I may as well give you his last," adds Mr. West. "He was present with me at a military ball at the International Hotel, Bray. I had introduced him to a lady who was with me, and when he was cloaking her on leaving he told her that an Italian of his acquaintance one evening doing the same thing to a lady, though *un peu indiscrète*, she said, "Don't be naughty," her husband coming in asked her what she had said, and she replied, "Buona notte."

It was during his last visit to Ireland that the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred upon him by the University of Dublin. He had long relinquished his early title of Dr. Lever; he now reassumed it with satisfaction, and renewed his former active life in the Phœnix Park, notwithstanding that the blue sky of his country wept pretty much as usual. He made many calls; not a few old familiar knockers were raised; and bells pulled, to receive, on more than one occasion, alas, a chilling response! Some of these knockers had been previously draped with crape—tidings which had failed to reach Lever in his exile. Early associations pleasantly intertwined round Clare—and a desire to utilise its stirring traditions led Lever to wish for an interview with Purcell O'Gorman, a noted *bon raconteur*. But his son tells us that he had attained at this time his eightieth year, and finding his memory failing, he shrank from the interview, and left Dublin.

Though Lever could throw off a novel in instalments only, he composed *currente calamo;* but his books were marked by characteristics widely different from those who write with ease, and are read with difficulty. He often deferred "putting on the steam" till the last moment. A friend, who found him correcting the proofs of "Lord Kilgobbin," said—

"This, I suppose, is for the June number of *Cornhill*." "No," he replied, "it is for May on which we are just about to enter." "You are fitting it very tight," continued his visitor. "I always run things very close,"

he replied, "I can't work except from month to month; or rather, as they say in Ireland, from hand to mouth. I wish to see how the public like it. I was offered £2,000, for a complete novel, but I could not do it." From revision he continued to recoil, holding with Scott that great correctors succeed as ill in composition as in education, and that many a clever boy has been flogged into a dunce, and many an original piece corrected into mediocrity.

Emotion filled him on revisiting scenes endeared by early ties. Dublin he now saw, as he well knew, for the last time, but he sipped the honey wherever he found it, and generally kept clear of the stings. Though disease was at work, he was Charles O'Malley —every inch of him—still. His niece tells us that on accompanying her to Westland Row terminus, dressed as youthfully and gaily as ever, his funny stories threw her into such convulsions of laughter, that she felt abashed on finding herself surrounded by those who convert into a waiting room that part of the platform known as the "pen."

"You may never see me again," said Lever, "and you must kiss me now." "But those people are not to know you are my uncle!" replied his pretty companion. "I'll take care that they do," whispered Lever, and he forthwith loudly called upon his niece to fold, in a loving embrace, her venerable uncle just about to start for America." So saying, he rapidly performed the feat, "smacked the honey" and went his way, proud of the

achievement, and feeling all the stronger from the exhilaration it diffused.

One of the last letters written by the late Mr. Justice Keogh was addressed to us in relation to the present task.

"Poor Charles Lever. He was my friend. I regarded him much as the most kindly, generous, and genial of men. His conversation never flagged, and his recollection of friendship and early friends was always bright. He passed two days with me at Elgin Road, when last in Dublin, and was the delight of all. The last time before, that I had seen him, was at Villa Morelli near Florence. The Derby Government had just come in. I said to him 'Lever, now is your time.' 'No,' he said, 'my dear fellow, they will do nothing for me. If I go to London, Derby and Dizzy, and all the rest of them will say, Lever, come and dine, Lever, tell us one of your good stories, but no thought of doing anything for me.'

"I thought otherwise, and was gratified at hearing from him at Rome that he was promoted to a consulate at Trieste. He lost his wife there, and that loss cost him his life."*

His Alma Mater, the scene of early freaks and follies, attracted him during several successive days. Here, too, the best whist-players were to be found. He won £2 in Mr. Palmer's rooms, and dropping into Mr. Williamson's that night on his way home, when some of

* Letter of the late Right Hon. Mr. Justice Keogh, September 16, 1876.

the best hands had assembled to meet him, lost £20. But his bright thoughts and silver tongue flew all the while, no matter what turn the luck had taken. One anecdote he told on this occasion has been preserved. "Lever," writes one of the party, "was playing whist at Florence with two foreigners and an Englishman named Harvey. They played in the continental system, according to which, the players play with each other in turn, and do not cut for partners. On it being announced to one of the players, a Frenchman, that it was his turn to have Mr. Harvey for a partner, he exclaimed, '*Mais j'ai déjà fait mon* Harvey!' He had already played once with him, and it may be inferred that he was not a brilliant whister."*

His tact and geniality in impressing all with whom he had formed first acquaintance that he was their friend for life, greatly struck Mr. Tyrrell, F.T.C.D. The days of swagger and of "the cavalcade" had passed, and Lever had already found that the secret of social success was to seem to think nothing of himself. "I met him at the Fellows' table at dinner," writes the Bishop of Limerick, "and afterwards in the room of Dr. Wright, Professor of Botany, who entertained him at supper. "If he were alive, he would say that he spent a pleasant evening. At the table in our common room to which we adjourned to take our wine, he was well placed, sitting next to the Bishop of Killaloe, and later in the evening he found himself amongst some of our

* Letter of Arthur Palmer, Esq., F. T. C. D., Feb. 7, 1879.

ablest young men, Williamson, Leslie, &c. Walking home with C. Lever, I had much pleasant talk with him about politics and literature. His ripeness of mind, and geniality of character, struck me very much. I had not expected to find in him such breadth of view and depth of insight."*

"I never met him but on that one occasion," writes the Bishop of Killaloe. "He was in high spirits, very amusing, and told most laughable stories. Mr. Thackeray, I think, dined with us on the same day."†

It was no exceptional occasion that Dr. Wright entertained Lever at supper. On every evening that he had no special engagement elsewhere, he came down either to Dr. Wright's rooms, or to Mr. Williamson's. Dr. Wright had boated with Lever in the bay of Spezzia when in his prime; but he describes him, during this last visit to Dublin, as immensely exceeding in vivacity and wit all that he had previously known of him. Lord Spencer, Sir B. Burke, Judge Keogh, Mr. Courtnay Boyle depose to the same effect.

But it struck Dr. Shaw, F.T.C.D., a most acute and thoughtful observer, who met him daily at the Fellows' table, that, beneath this glittering surface, tinges of care transparently peeped; that something weighed upon his mind, buoyant and effervescent as it seemed to assert itself.

A man who largely shared his confidence at this time

* Letter of the Bishop of Limerick, August 9, 1872.

† The Bishop's impression as to Thackeray's presence, applies to a distinct evening.

can throw light on the cause. Mr. Edward Dicey had been his guest at Florence, and was often closeted with him in London. "He had known bitter sorrow," he writes, "and long trouble; he had had many a hard contest to sustain in the battle of life, and even to the last he was compelled to carry on the weary combat. He was oppressed by the conviction that much as he had done, it had been in him to have done yet more. He saw men of not one tittle of his genius arrive at higher fame, and at a far greater proportion of the material rewards than he ever obtained. He was troubled with failing health, and the loss of those he loved best; and yet, to the last, he had more of the boy's nature, more true enjoyment of the things that make this world pleasant than nine-tenths of the men who in years might have been his sons and grandsons. It is difficult to speak of the man that he was without carrying a false impression to those who knew him not. But to live not for the day, but every day to take mankind as you find them, trying, indeed, to better them, but yet not believing very firmly in the possibility of their amelioration, to look out upon the world, and, on the whole, to find it good: such was the creed to which Charles Lever was prone by instinct, and in which the circumstances of his life had confirmed his allegiance."

The keen eye of a great physician penetrated still deeper than the suspicion of Dr. Shaw. Sometimes at dinner, while a sparkling anecdote glittered on his lips, it was observed by Dr. Stokes that his knife or fork would drop from his hands—a symptom of the subtle

approach of paralysis; and it is remarkable that the same incident occurred to Curran when dining with Moore in 1817. Lever, beyond the consciousness of a slight awkwardness having occurred, attached no importance to the act; but the vigilant physician viewed it not without emotion. Lever liked Stokes, and breakfasted with him on the day of his final departure from Ireland.*

The doctor, however, whom he consulted was Wilde. He complained that his once bright eyes had lost their lustre and strength; also of insidious attacks of somnolency, which, if not battled against, made frequent and successful efforts to seize him. Sir William Wilde examined him with all his instruments and tests, but found nothing optically wrong. He ascribed the affection of his eyes to stomachic derangement, consequent on indulgence in suppers.†

The bright chain of friends who erst had encircled him had indeed lost many links: and a sigh would escape as one by one he missed them. This was observed on an occasion during his last visit, when he accepted an invitation to dine at the University Club. Standing to receive cordial salutations, his back leaning against a

* Letter of Wm. Stokes, Esq., Regius Professor of Physic, T. C. D., April 20, 1873. To Stokes—a man of gloom to patients, but a real Rabelais of humour when freed from the restraints of professional pomp and mystery—Lever owed not a few good stories. One of them was the scene in the canal boat, where Father Loftus eats all the salmon at dinner, and makes the apology that it was a fast day in his church. "Do you think nobody has a soul to save but yourself?" exclaimed Standish O'Grady, coming behind his chair and helping himself freely to a liberal share of the rich fish.

† Letter of the late Sir W. Wilde, M.D., March 10, 1876.

chiffonier on which some books lay, he remarked, with a sigh, that many once-familiar faces had gone.

"You have still some old friends *at your back*," observed Mr. Gage,* pointing behind Lever, who, turning rapidly round, found to his surprise "Harry Lorrequer," "Charles O'Malley," "Jack Hinton," and "Tom Burke." His fancy thus electrically touched, blazed into refulgence, and no more sighs were heard that night. His absence of vanity was, as usual, conspicuous. Mr. Gage having praised "Lorrequer," Lever merely said, "a poor thing—but how well Browne illustrated it"—and then restored the volume to its place.

The tinge of sadness noticed by Dr. Shaw, Mr. Gage, and others, struck Dr. Nedley under circumstances which deserve to be described. At the Viceregal Lodge, it had so happened that as Lever entered the room filled by many persons, all chatting in groups, his name by some mistake was not announced, and nobody greeted the distinguished visitor or seemed to notice him. Lever retired to a corner, sat down, and as he placed his head on his hand, an expression of intense melancholy overspread his features.

Dr. Nedley from the published portraits of Lever at once recognised him and took advantage of his position,

* The father of Mr. Gage was a clergyman in Derry with whom Lever had been associated in early life. The parson's wife kept a medicine chest for the relief of local sufferers, and one of the bottles bore the then well-known label of "Lever's Specific." This, which was quite original in its character and composition, enjoyed, Mr. Gage says, a wonderful reputation in Ulster.

as one of the Household, to advance and make himself known. In a moment Lever was all animation, assured him that he had been urged by more than one mutual friend to meet the pleasant anecdotist, grasped him by the hand and compared notes. Touching an incident in one of Nedley's stories, Lever said, "It reminds me of my old friend Anster, the translator of Faust, who was called to the Bar, but after one successful circuit, cut it. An interesting looking man, with a previously good character was, on purely circumstantial evidence, tried for agrarian murder. Anster felt acutely for his position, defended him ably, and got him off. The man overwhelmed his deliverer with gratitude; Anster participated in his emotion. He left the country, but a knock at Anster's door when he was one night buried in his papers, led him to answer it himself. Anster, at all times very absent, now, on recognising his former client confounded his name with that of the murdered man, and exclaimed, 'What! Kelly?' 'No, your honour,' was the reply, 'I am the boy that shot him!' Anster was almost equally shot by the announcement, tottered back appalled, and with that womanly voice which his friends well remember, tremulously told the murderer to be off!"

"Lever sat with me for a long while in my room," writes the Lord-Lieutenant's private secretary. "We talked about his last novel, then coming out, in which Viceregal life and diplomacy were brought in. And then we got on to Ireland generally. I remember being

struck with the affection he seemed to feel for the Irish people. I myself was then rather discontented with the want of gratitude shown in my opinion by the Irish for Mr. Gladstone's magnanimous and determined endeavours to remove their grievances: and I felt that unreal grievances were being clamorously put forward by a certain section, while no section showed much satisfaction. I also looked upon the continued agrarian difficulties as showing a misconception of the principles of justice and fairplay which was not creditable. Lever however defended the nation loyally. He urged that the general belief in the generosity and warm-heartedness of the people was not misplaced. He dwelt strongly and affectionately upon the many good qualities they showed individually, and said that too much importance was not to be attached to the outbreaks of lawlessness. All this I am stating from my memory of an interview which made much impression on me, but of which I kept no formal memoranda. Lever seemed feeble in health, but he was most pleasant, and the time which he spent in my room passed most rapidly. Lord Spencer afterwards expressed to me the pleasure he had derived from meeting him. Shortly after our chat I received a copy of his novel, and, alas! within a very brief period, I heard of his death." *

Lever spent some time in London, but it lacked the charm for him which most people prize. "Just as I feel the roll of the Atlantic is the finest bathing in

* Letter of Courtnay Boyle, Esq. to the author, April 22nd, 1879.

the world, if you be a strong swimmer," he soliloquised, "so do I believe there is nowhere like London to live in if you be rich enough. It's very poor fun, though, if you can only scramble and struggle, hold on by another, or shout for a lifebelt. In such a sad plight as this, I fancy I am just as well in shallow water, stagnant though it be, and a little muddy at bottom."

Whatever he may have inwardly felt, Lever took pains to seem in thorough enjoyment. Mr. Edward Dicey who saw a good deal of him during this last visit to London, writes, "there never lived a human being so *antipatico* —to use an Italian phrase—to cant of any kind. The rich joyous humour, the love of pleasant company, the taste for social enjoyment were as keen and bright in the old consul of Trieste as they had been in the young surgeon who walked the hospitals half a century ago."

In addition to the usual expenses of London, he seems to have lost heavily at whist. Had the furrowed brow of calculation given place to the bright glow of the *raconteur*, his pocket would probably have made more gains. In his extremity he waited upon Mr. W. H. Smith, M.P., to whom he introduced himself, and asked as a favour that he would oblige him by a payment on account of the books in which the eminent firm of Smith and Son were pecuniarily interested. Mr. Smith, handing him a blank cheque, requested that he would fill for any amount most likely to convenience him. This privilege Lever declined; but he added, as he told what

passed, that Mr. Smith handsomely placed a large sum at his disposal.

He now breathed more freely, and would derive real pleasure from a night spent at the Cosmopolitan Club, Berkeley Square. "This club," writes one who knows it, "is open only upon Wednesday and Sunday nights during the parliamentary session. The members stroll in from eleven o'clock at night to about three o'clock a.m. Cabinet Ministers, Ambassadors of all nations, members of the Legislature, eminent littérateurs, Royal Academicians repair thither for a gossip; and here, amidst the best talkers in the world, Charles Lever stood pre-eminent. As the wits and *raconteurs* at Wills' coffee-house were silent whilst Addison talked Spectator, so the members of the Cosmopolitan maintained a breathless attention when Lever talked Cornelius O'Dowd; and many a man has 'dined out considerably' upon a *mot*, and has, perhaps, established a reputation by the retailing of an anecdote recounted within the *salons* of the club by the fascinating 'Harry Lorrequer.' When I parted with Lever upon that evening, I felt justly elated at being enabled to amuse, if not astonish the most brilliant man of the day; but, upon a rigid self-examination, was somewhat disappointed upon discovering that instead of having been engaged in entertaining Lever, Lever had been entertaining me, and that I had not uttered a single sentence out of the veriest commonplace. Such was the charm of Lever's manner that he took you as it were from out yourself, and for the time infused his own

tone of thought, causing your ideas to mingle with his, and float joyously onward upon the glittering current of his conversation."

If Lever caught a tartar in the Tuscan tailor, he found a worthy in a Saxon one. Pleasant accounts come from the tailor, at whose house, 33, Brook Street, he lodged when in London. "Night after night when it would have been much better to be in bed, I sat up listening to Mr. Lever's stories—sometimes in chinks of laughter—often spell-bound."

From old Lord Lytton a kind letter came, inviting Lever and his daughter Sydney to Knebworth. Lever had never been in higher spirits, and shouted no end of droll stories into the now deaf ear of the author of "Devereux." Lord Lytton took up incorrectly something said; and Lever, on his return to town, complained that "he had become very touchy."

He passed his last week in London not unpleasantly, picking up character in regions where it had often been lost. The Law Courts presented attraction to him, especially the great Tichborne trial, of which it was full. With all his keen discernment of character, he seems to have been duped by the Claimant. He described him as a vulgar beast to view, but that he was Sir Roger and no Dodger for all that.

Thackeray's hostility to Miss Pardoe, Miss Brontë, and other women—of which we find trace in the record of Major D——'s conversations with him, appended to this work—led Lever to believe that he understood one side

of female character only, and was unable to do justice to the whole. "Lever and I," writes the Major, "had a conversation on this subject as we drove through Park Lane on our way to Onslow Gardens; both of us expressed regret at this blemish, as we thought it, in Thackeray's fine power of perception; and Lever wound up by saying, 'Every man has a double nature in him: the one masculine, and partaking more of the mere animal; the other feminine, and this is by far the best part of him; but it must be awakened. Not everyone is so happy in this respect as I have been. I never fully knew or appreciated all the exquisite beauty and tenderness of the female character until my own daughters came to console and support me under the greatest affliction I have ever had to bear. They, poor things, will never know how much I feel indebted to them, nor how deeply grateful I am to them.'"

One having married, a gushing acquaintance wrote Lever a long letter of congratulation. He drily replied that the match was one to conciliate all his sympathies, for the *sposo* was rich, saving, and a staunch Calvinist: three strong guarantees for this life and the next.

But never was there a man less mercenary or calculating. It having been represented to him that Mr. ——, who greatly loved his eldest daughter, and who at this time asked permission to call, was not opulent, he replied, "There is something to be thought of besides money in the world."

CHAPTER XI.

His place of punishment—His last book—Death of his wife—The finger of Death inscribes "Finis" on his career—Recollections of the last scene—His works, worth, and character.

THE excitement which gilded his last visit to the sun-lit spots of youth, was followed by a reaction, and he would sometimes on his return to Italy think tenderly both of Ireland and of England, and sigh to renew relations with the brilliant men who thronged the tables of Lord Lytton, or Lord Houghton, or to commune with the Cosmopolitan Club, where he declared the acme of pleasant talk was to be found. Dublin, his first love, he saw for the last time; and when leaving its bay, he "cast a longing, lingering look behind." A friend tried to console him. His exile had, at least, one advantage, it removed him from the snare of social enjoyments and gave him fuller scope for that work which the world could not afford to lose.

Mr. Dicey writes: "He was far away from his old haunts, friends and associations, and he pined sadly to get nearer home. 'I am going back to my place of punishment,' so he said to the present writer, when he was leaving London for the last time. A year after he

wrote to a friend here, describing how he had invited a small party to celebrate his birthday, and had had to put them off owing to a fresh attack of illness, adding, with his wonted humour, 'the guests were, however, consoled by the reflection that their loss of the entertainment would soon be made up for by an invitation to my funeral.'"

Ere long, a pleasanter invitation came. Macaulay once got quizzed for dating a letter from Windsor Castle. Lever hoped that the same measure would not be extended to him for announcing to his old friend F. D., that he had just been the guest of the Emperor of Austria. This was in March, 1870.

At Trieste he had secured as a residence the very elegant Villa Gasteiger, but the place itself did not improve on acquaintance. A fish in a cornfield—his own figure—could not be more out of its element. More than once he found himself on the verge of pitching up the Consulate, and throwing himself, as he said, on "Penny-a-lining;" and nothing but the break-up, which could not be far distant, deterred him; and as he sank down into greater apathy every day, he said it mattered less when he finished, since the mode of finish must be pretty much the same everywhere!

So long as he could turn to any sort of work, he might prevent his brain, as he said, digesting itself; but latterly all such occupation was impossible, and he had fallen into great depression. Some of the thorns which helped to create the unpleasantness of his exile have

been pushed into light. Others, which he makes grow pleasantly, as though from a hawthorn-tree, peep forth in a missive from Trieste.

"T'other day one of those creatures who presume on the fact of being an old schoolfellow, to maintain an acquaintanceship, dormant for half a lifetime, as if there could be any bond of friendship cemented by having been flogged by the same cane, came through the neighbourhood where I have pitched my tent, and installed himself as my guest;" and then follows a long account of his sufferings, trying to entertain one of the dullest of men, who said the most *mal-à-propos* things, and touched on the sorest of points.

When freed from this bore, he resumed "Kilgobbin," and worked with a will. "He wrote as a man for men," observes a thoroughly congenial guest, Mr. Dicey; "the mental struggle of dissatisfied schoolgirls, the complications arising out of a young lady's hesitation as to the proprieties of her engagement, the flirtations of curates, had no attractions for that vigorous manly mind."

Had Lever pandered to sensationalism, he would have died no doubt a richer man. But he resisted all temptation, and held on his old course austerely. His thoughts on this point will be found in a paper called "The Picturesque in Morals," urging that the great effort of moralists should be to keep vice to its coarse habiliments, and never let it masquerade in the bright costumes and graceful colours that captivate. "Vice is not so seductive, as vice in its travesty of what we

admire and cherish. Sever the connection, and like a bad swimmer without his life-belt, a few struggles will suffice to finish it. Strip wickedness of its accessories, and you'll not have to call it a snare. When it ceases to be 'picturesque,' it ceases to be perilous."

Apropos of the picturesque, a thinker had just asked how it came to pass that the ruined wall, the broken gable, the lichen-clad stone, afford us a pleasure, that a trim enclosure, a finished building and a well-scrubbed pavement, fail to bring? Lever remarked that the picturesque hue of the characters in sensation novels, was the source of all their captivation.

"Is it not the reputation in ruins, the fissured fame, the gracefully dilapidated virtue, that we admire so fervently? Take up any French novel you will, and do you not find that the moral people are represented with all those traits of exactness and order which we reprobate pictorially, while the naughty ones are as broken, as irregular, as abounding in lights and shadows as an Elizabethan manor-house?"

He declared that it was much easier and pleasanter to indulge in picturesque painting of this sort, than to make right lines and rectangular shadows.

From Trieste, he constantly wrote to Major D——, for no other reason, he archly said, than that which makes a painter daub something on his canvas, because he had the brush in his hand. It has been said that to the last he was full of this vivacity to those around him, but unhappily it was not so.

Sir Henry James, Q.C., writes :—

"I met Mr. Lever first in this country in the year 1870, whilst he was engaged in endeavouring to make some business arrangements in relation to the copyright of his works. In September, 1871, I paid him a visit at Trieste, which lasted some three or four days. He was residing there with his daughters, Miss Lever and Mrs. Watson. He was suffering much from gout; and was by no means in good spirits. He rarely exercised his anecdotal power and his chief pleasure seemed to be in playing whist."

An old friend of Lever's, long known to the present writer, died at this time. Intimate intercourse throve from boyhood between Lever and Alexander Spencer. Lever wrote condoling words to his widow, and expressed a painful presentiment of his own approaching end. Within a few days, the news reached him that his good friend, Dr. Thomas Beatty of Dublin, had died. But a few days before, Lever in sadness had sought his counsel, and leant upon him earnestly. This succession of shocks told.* He opened the will which he had executed in 1865, and added a codicil †, dated May the

* See Mr. J. S. Lefanu's letter, *infra*, Appendix.

† His youngest daughter, Sydney, he writes, is amply provided for by the settlement of her marriage with Mr. Smith, and his daughter Kate, the wife of Mr. Bowes Watson, will ultimately, under the settlement executed on her marriage, come into the possession of an adequate income, and he, therefore, gave the whole of his property, his policies in the Globe and Guardian Insurance offices, to his executors upon trust, in the first place to pay his debts and testamentary expenses, then to set apart £1000, and to pay the interest to his daughter Kate, until she shall under her marriage settlement

14th, making due provision for his daughters. Like Shakespeare and Milton, Farquhar and Scott, he left girls behind him, but no son.

At last he whom he described as his one friend at Trieste—Möring—died. One by one his friends were dropping, till Lever sat almost alone on the raft. He said, that the drear process with its dimmed eyes, dulled hearing and its shaking ankles, was infinitely worse in its terrible fate of survivorship than all else. One of his last friends was Major D——, happily still left. With this genial man he corresponded so freely, that Lever sometimes expressed misgivings as to whether he had addressed him last. He apologised for this weakness of the head, that soon might have more to answer for. The good old Major was now the sole repository of his confidences. Most lives, he held, were arrant blunders. Over and over had he wished that he never left his dispensary with its tiny fees; but such regrets came too late.

"To me," D—— writes, "whom Lever honoured with his friendship almost from my schoolboy days, it has often been a subject of regret, that the peculiar form of Lever's writings and, to a certain extent, his bearing towards strangers, should have afforded only a very imperfect insight into his truly noble character, or, still worse, may perhaps have led some persons to form totally erroneous

come into the income of the property therein settled on her, after which event the £1000 is to fall into his residuary estate. The annual income of the latter is directed by testator to be paid to his daughter Julia, for her life, and at her decease the capital is to go to such persons and in such a manner as she shall by her last will and testament direct.

ideas on the subject. In truth, he was very inadequately represented in his published writings; his great ability, judgment, sound practical sense and, above all, his very highly truthful character and great purity of mind were so overlaid in the novel by his vivid imagination, as to have been scarcely recognisable. His affectionate disposition and wonderful, almost feminine, tenderness and delicacy of sentiment, he could of course sometimes fail to display. No man that really possesses these qualities, but will be anxious to keep them out of sight for reasons which are, alas, but too painfully brought home to each one of us in his daily warfare. But it was impossible to have enjoyed Lever's society, much less intimacy, for any length of time without gaining an insight into his true character and habits of thought; and it was precisely this combination of manly determination and outspoken truthfulness, regardless of consequences, with tenderness of feeling, that formed one of its chief attractions; it was difficult to feel aught but perfect confidence in a man of this type."

The high moral tone of his stories had favourably impressed the Bishop of Limerick. His son, Mr. Alfred Graves, having expressed a desire to dramatise them, on receiving some hints from the author, got a painful picture of his prostration at the period to which Sir Henry James points. "He wrote from a sofa," he said; "his miserable condition with no brilliant prospect of speedy betterment, would show how unable he was to do anything at that moment." Indeed he had to send

back untouched and uncorrected a few "O'Dowd" papers, meant for the coming Blackwood. He asked Mr. Graves to forgive him if he was illegible, gout was a bad writing master, and even without it, he was no miracle of caligraphy. In conclusion, Lever expressed sincere pleasure at the hazard which had opened relations between them, and promised, if he got better, to lend what aid he could to the project. "O'Donoghue," he thought, would dramatise well, though for stage play and dialogue, "Kilgobbin" might be preferable. Lever added that Mr. Labouchere, lessee of a London theatre, had already pressed him to give facilities in this way. He begged his friend to forgive the seeming selfishness of this and other gossip, but asked him to remember that his egotism had now but a short course to run.

In November '71, some guests of rank filled his home. He described them as pleasant, but enforcing an amount of exertion on his part, that became a heavy penalty. He often wished that "the Major" were his neighbour. Neither of them, he said, found it easy to find a man very companionable now. They were too old for the young people, and too young and too romantic for the old. At all events they would make better company for each other, than they were likely to find elsewhere.

All things considered he kept up his spirits wonderfully; but he by no means found the world what it had been. This was not because Lever had himself changed, but seems to have been due rather to the languid tone in society which had latterly become fashionable. In

fact there was for his taste not enough of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, and too much of Sir Charles Coldstream.

"I wonder," he said, "is life as good fun as it was when I made my first acquaintance with it? My impression is that it is not. 'It wasn't bad,' is about the highest expression of praise; and I doubt if we would accord more to heaven, if we get there. I do not think the present occupants make the house as pleasant as their fathers did, and for the simple reason, that they never try. Indifferentism is the tone of the day. No one must be eager, pleased, displeased, interested, or anxious about anything. Life is to be treated as a tiresome sort of thing, but which is far too much beneath one to be thought of seriously, a wearisome performance which good manners require you should sit out, though nothing obliges you to applaud or even approve of it."

A brief and flashing visit from Tom Taylor helped to relieve this impression:* his pen resumed work. A famous diplomatist, Sir H. Bulwer, had just received his peerage, and with his wife, a niece of the great Duke of Wellington, made some stay at the Villa Gasteïger. He and Lever had long been most intimate; and they interchanged their sentiments with a candour the reverse of official.†

* Mr. Taylor writes: "My impressions of Charles Lever are too slight, and derived from too brief and, I am sorry to say, slight acquaintanceship, to be of any service for your life of that admirable humorist." Mr. Taylor kindly offers a suggestion which has been acted upon, and adds that Lever was even then suffering from the illness that brought his life to a premature end.

† Lord Dalling died within a few days of Lever, and his title became extinct with himself.

"I object to Kilgobbin," said Lord Dalling, "as having no one character transcendently pure or good or virtuous."

"Certainly," replied Lever, "the reproach coming from you has its significance, for you have yourself seen a great deal of life that was not pure or virtuous; but I verily believe that in my sketch of ordinary life, the transcendently good will occupy a small space, and the stage be filled by the people of mixed motives, not very wicked or the reverse; but doing a variety of inconvenient, and some positively bad things; out of temper, passing resentment, imaginary injury, wounded self-love, and worse than all—hang them—pure idleness! It is of these the kingdom of the world is made up, and we know it is not Heaven!"

It was again suggested to Lever that some of his stories should be dramatised. He replied that tempting offers had been made to him to write for the stage, but, the thing that alone he could do, "Genteel Comedy," was exactly what no one wanted, and as for stage effects, headers over precipices, blue lights, bunkum, and Bengal fire, he knew nothing about them, and last of all he had put himself *en retraite;* determined, like the country mouse, that hard peas and peace are better than fine food and anxiety; and that to leave one's few remaining days without fear of reviewers, is sounder policy than to drink champagne with an aggrieved spirit and an injured heart.

"The old hulk," as he called it, was now breaking up fast. His appetite had gone; his spirits had long since

left him; strength was failing; and his head which he used to think would have stood to the last, was showing such signs of what he called "wool," that like a man on a grazing horse, he began to travel slowly and, as he told D——, never adventured a canter even when the ground was tempting.

In January, 1872, he felt so ill that he wrote on a slip of paper to tell F. D. that his oldest friend living died at such an hour, and desired that his last greeting should be sent him. An ugly combination of gout and acute bronchitis fought each other, and left him as he said, to get well in the meantime,—the only explanation that occurred to him of a rally that owed little to physic and less to the physician—the only doctor near hand being a man midwife, and he was delivered of "Kilgobbin" before he was called in.

These characteristic words he wrote to D——, and the same tone, some days later, was resumed. He would have been thankful to go ere his faculties had felt a cold decline, and when he had not survived himself in his own memory. A man need not be impatient, however, who knows that his name would soon be called, and so he fell back to his place in the cards and waited.

"Kilgobbin," previous to its publication in three volumes, appeared monthly in the *Cornhill*. To his old friend he confessed that it was not all he had intended, and there was scarcely a character in the book had not got away from him and set up on his own account. This if he had a story, would be most em-

barrassing, but as really he had very little to tell it mattered hardly at all.

In February he was persuaded by his daughter, Mrs. Sydney Smith to spend some time with them at Tirnau and try to regain strength. She filled the house with pleasant people, and even got up theatricals in French and Italian, succeeding far better as Lever confessed than anything of the sort he had previously seen.

His final broodings drifted towards an unhealthy idea. Addressing an old friend full of genius, but who had never received the recognition due to high merit, he said, "You and I have *manqué* in life each in his several ways. Each of us have seen himself passed in the race by men he knew inferior to him, and his best philosophy is to believe that defeat has its iron consolations if one knew how to look for them; and that the quietude employed by him who stands apart from the contest of life has all the comforts of conquest. Perhaps breaking health has taught me this lesson, and if so I am not ungrateful to my gout."

A great deal has been written on the alleged unhappiness of literary men in their domestic relations, but surely the ranks of the butter-men and boot-makers, the military, and the merchants, if equally tempting to inquiry, would show quite as many cases of matrimonial failure. Lever's married life presented, in its felicity, a contrast to that of not a few great contemporaries.

In "Kilgobbin" he had tried to forget care. He was conscious of a want of consistency and proportion in it;

so he told D——, but the *Saturday Review* consoled him in declaring that the author had shown himself "as vigorous as ever; here is all the old tact, all the old versatility, and, in spite of circumstances, much of the old lightness and brightness. Nina and Atlee are as good in their several ways as anything Mr. Lever has given us lately, and we are really sorry to take leave of them just when their respective careers threaten to become most exciting. They are the last persons to settle down into humdrum lives, and we venture to cherish a hope that Mr. Lever may tell us more of them."

Mrs. Peachem said that "we are bitter bad judges of ourselves:" and the same statement is often made in Lever's letters. We have seen acute critics pronouncing "Kilgobbin" one of his best: he himself regarded it very differently. A brother scribe who called upon Lever in Dublin during his last visit to Ireland and found him correcting the proofs of "Kilgobbin," said, "I consider it as well written as any of your works." He sighed as he replied sadly enough, "Ah no, I have been tilting the cask so long that the dregs are coming out very muddy."

The death of his wife utterly stunned him. The companion who would have cheered, comforted, and sustained him in trial, had gone; and she would never again strive to share success with him. Lever wrote to D—— that the unspeakable vacancy of hearts he felt—the terrible sense of desolation, was more misery than he had ever known. Her last moments were peaceful and painless, and God in His mercy gave her consciousness and love

to the last, and a smile of more beauty than he had ever seen bade him farewell. There would be no such mercy as to take him from this life now. All his daily ways and habits had been woven into her life; no strength of frame could withstand the pining agony of a broken heart. He had lost a truthful, honest, and loyal wife. Heavy crosses had come upon him through life: but, when shared, they could be borne. Suffering without sympathy was the hardest trial of all. She was, indeed, a rare woman—even the people had manifested a general grief, the entire city followed her to the grave; all the ships had their flags half-masted—thus he wrote to a life-long friend. One letter of condolence from Major D—— gave him great comfort. He said the very things Lever wanted to read, the very words he loved to hear. He talked of the dead as he remembered to have seen her—graced by traits of goodness and kindness, and loyalty of heart. These memories of her worth and beauty touchingly affected the desolate husband.

His pen-work had long been linked to his darling wife. He read to her not only what he wrote before venturing to despatch it, but also told her of his plans. Her counsel proved unexceptionally right. Henceforth, he was distrustful of what he attempted, and more thoroughly timid than he had been since his earliest days of authorship. This would be intolerable, he said, had he not become, indeed, indifferent about success. Forebodings filled him that he might not live to finish even "Kilgobbin." Lever liked to elicit the criticism

of women—for women were the public who read novels. The daughter of a dear old friend undertook to supply, in some degree, the censorship of her who had left him. She thought "Kilgobbin" too political—with not enough of romance. Lever replied, that if he had not made his characters much in love, it was simply that he had too deep a veneration for the passion to sell his sentiments on it to a bookseller.

He told the Major that in finishing "Kilgobbin" he also finished his own career as a story writer. Time was, when the end of a journey only heralded the preparation for another. "Now," he said, "the next must be a longer road, and much larger experiences; with, however, little reason for confidence to undertake it—I do so long for rest—rest!"

Months elapsed: his sorrow deepened, and he could only wonder how his craving desire for death was not able, in itself, to break him up. Every succeeding day now only increased his "helplessness." Gloomy forebodings shook him as he penned the last lines of "Lord Kilgobbin," and few read without emotion his public allusion to the fact that they were "written in breaking health and broken spirits. The task that was once my joy and pride, I have lived to find associated with my sorrow. It is not, then, without a cause I say, I hope this effort may be my last."* Critics were disarmed, and

* This determination is the more touching as Lever a few months previously told Major D—— that he wrote, not from choice, but from sheer necessity for bread.

kindly expressions fell from all sides. "We would fain believe," said the *Saturday Review*, "that it was penned in an hour of natural depression; that time may bring consolation for the loss to which it sadly alludes; and that the hope with which it concludes may prove fallacious. It touches us the more that we remember so well what the writer once was. Who had such unflagging animal spirits as Lever? who could draw so freely on a perennial flood of mirth and humour, yet never find the fountain fail?"

The deliberate mode in which his austere resolve found record was like pronouncing sentence of death on himself. To relinquish for ever a pen which seemed to drip with the elixir of life realised a fact almost as grim as death. "Lord Kilgobbin"—written under conflicting emotions—he dedicated "To the memory of one, whose companionship made the happiness of a long life."

For thirty years Lever had been periodically teased by rheumatic gout. He, who loved active liberty, had found himself of late chained. That metastasis of rheumatic inflammation, known to physicians for the subtle treachery with which it strikes the heart, led possibly to the valvular disease that hastened his doom.

A few weeks before that event he said to a friend, "I cannot yet say that I am round the corner, and, to tell truth, I have so little desire of life, that my own lassitude and low spirits go a good way in bearing me down."

In sending "Kilgobbin" to his old friend, Dr. Maunsell the journalist, he remarked that there was plenty to

abuse, if he felt so disposed; but, some of the characters talked well and would bear extract. He added that, gout and bronchitis had carried their attack, and he saw he must capitulate. However, he had had a long day, and he couldn't say that he'd care for a respite, if offered.

Nothing could be more unlike "O'Malley," or its immediate successors, than "Lord Kilgobbin"—a novel somewhat in the style of Anthony Trollope. Free from fun, it flowed with the old racy humour of Molière and Cervantes, which Lever more than once feared had been lost. "What has become of this gift?" he once asked. "It is gone and lost like the art of painting on glass, like the glaze of Lucca della Robbia, or the wonderful pottery paste of Maestro Giorgio." In "Lord Kilgobbin" we find a bold attempt to revive it. Instead of Alcides singing of love, and war, and wine, Ulysses dryly tells of the men whom he met and studied. Practical jokes and bounding somersaults which whilom took our breath away, are discarded in favour of diamond wit, mellow wisdom, and polished epigram. Young readers, who loved Lorrequer shut the book disappointed; older heads enjoyed it, as they would "a solid glass of priestly port."

The *mens sana* which had so long lasted, was due to his unflagging enjoyment of life and to the gusto wherewith he quaffed the invigorating cup of social intercourse. This removed, his spirits sank, and his right hand ceased to toil.

The somnolency which had seized him heavily a year or two previously, was now succeeded by the opposite extreme. Narcotics were used; but they, in their re-

active retort, only deepened his depression. It was remarked in a *Cornhill* paper, probably inspired by Lever himself, that there is no period at which the real actual bodily wretchedness of a depressed man is so complete as during the early hours of a cold dawn after a sleepless night. Reaction and depression are then at their strongest. "Even to the exceptionally healthy there is something unspeakably dreary about the hours immediately preceding sunrise, when they are numbed with cold and sleeplessness—it is, in very fact, the hour of death, when more souls take their departure from earth than at any other of the twenty-four."

That change in ideas which is often the forerunner of death, showed itself a few weeks previous to his dissolution. He told Major D—— he would much like to see the old land once more; but he half suspected that a rush of visitors to his house had anticipated the funds he meant for travelling expenses, and that unless he went with Mr. Cook's excursion he should not have the "give." Austria, he described as not flourishing, and her paper money nearly at par—a state of things, he said, which took off about one-fifth of his small income.

The pain which gnawed into his heart and the debility clinging to it, annoyed him less than the thought that he was killing his poor girl by night-watches, "And all for nothing," he sadly said to D——. "Let the crew pump now, the leak gains every hour."

Bishop Graves and his son wrote in most kind and touching terms. Lever conveyed through Major D——

that this affectionate tone was most dear to him, and sent him all the gratitude of a man, who a very few days hence would not have even that to dispense.

The Major, with whom he communicated to the last, received an assurance, that, except so far as bad nights and worse days had depressed and worn him, he was not out of heart or spirits. He did wish rest, he owned it—to go away as a man desires to leave a company—when most of his chief companions had gone home; but except for this impatience for his carriage to be called, he was not fretful or fidgety. On the 23rd of May—a few days before his own dissolution—his old friend and recent guest, Lord Dalling, died.

Time was when, behind the mask of O'Dowd, he would say, "I know everybody worth knowing in Europe—I have been everywhere, eaten of everything, and seen everything. There's not a railway guard doesn't grin a recognition to me; not a waiter from the Trois Frères to the Wilde Mann doesn't trail his napkin to earth as he sees me. Ministers speak up when I stroll into the Chamber, and *prima donnas* soar above the orchestra as I enter the pit." But now he was called upon to realize a widely different prospect. In the strange mood of thought which marked his break-up, though scarcely able, from gout in the chest, to bend over his desk, he wrote the following extraordinary epitaph:—

> "For sixty odd years he lived in the thick of it;
> And now he is gone! not so much being sick of it
> As the thought that he heard somebody say,
> 'Harry Lorrequer's hearse now stops the way.'"

Kind-hearted to the last, we find him, some weeks before his death, undertaking to reconcile two friends between whom a coolness had grown. "I'll pledge myself," he said, "to settle the difficulty better than our people have settled the Alabama question."

A dear old friend, who had done something for letters and much for friendship, had met with reverses. The news touched Lever deeply. He exerted himself in his last breath; he made a last muscular effort to get him assistance from the Literary Fund through the kind offices of Lord Houghton, and having directed the course his friend should pursue to attain his object, his last word was an Irish prayer, "Good luck be with you."

His appeal to the Literary Fund had been written by his daughter, as he himself could hardly hold the pen, but on second thoughts he deemed it better the application should be in his own hand; he therefore wrote it anew, together with a private note to the secretary, Mr. Black. He was weaker and worse in every way, he said, and, in fact, Death that day was seated at the table. He was very anxious that his application should succeed, though the chances were he would not be there to know it.

The appeal proved successful, but ere Lever's letter reached London he was dead!

"Poor Lever's death," a letter from Trieste records, "though very sudden at the end, did not find us unprepared; as for nearly the last three months he was constantly suffering from his heart, and had become very

weak. During a short time I had noticed the greatest changes. His eye had lost its bright look, and at times his face had become quite grey. Though he was as full of joke as ever, with, in public at least, unflagging spirits, yet at times he was evidently depressed. On one of the last occasions that I was with him alone, he said to me, "I am weary and foot-sore, and have no desire to remain here."

Few had enjoyed life more thoroughly. Moore, who sang its praise as one "full of kindness and bliss," reaped the same sort of pleasure from it, but bitter care came at last, and Moore's end was shrouded in gloom. This reaction laid its grasp on Lever too; but God was merciful in not proportioning the extent of the penalty to the length of joy which had preceded it. A Greek proverb tells us that no man should be counted happy till he has ceased to live: and Moore and Lever seemed willing enough at last to die. Lever had often contemplated with a shudder the fate of Scott, Southey, Moore, and Swift. The letter from Trieste goes on to say: "He dreaded greatly lest he should have to undergo great physical suffering, and, above all, lest his intellect should fail. He said that the old hulk was so strongly put together, that he feared it would take a long time going to pieces."

Swift once pointed to an oak which had shown decay in its upper part, saying—"I also shall die at the top first." Lever's forebodings as to mental wreck proved groundless, though disease seemed spreading with searching subtlety through every valve.

His daughters, with the object of rallying his spirits, arranged that, when possible, a friend should dine with him daily; but the chill and dews of night were gathering, and it was now too late to cast them off, much less to shed around sunshine as of old. A spasmodic brightness was essayed; but the effort only extinguished him. Mr. Blackwood, then travelling in Italy, arranged to visit him. Lever sent him word that if he came, it would be to his funeral. Mr. Blackwood hurried to Trieste, and witnessed that bold flicker which usually precedes the drop of a flame into darkness.

One of the family writes:—"A friend dined with him the day previous to his death. He never was so brilliant, so much so that Mr. B—— congratulated him on his returning health. He retired to rest at twelve o'clock; in a short time his heart became so troublesome that he took some morphine, and fell into a child-like sleep. He awoke at half-past four o'clock, took a cup of coffee, and said he felt better, but tired, and would sleep more. Again, a most tranquil sleep succeeded. His daughter looked after him several times up to a late hour, when she was called away on some business with the vice-consul. On her return, not hearing him breathe, she stooped over him and found him dead, but quite warm; his head resting on his hand, evidently having passed away without a struggle."

Mr. W. Blackwood writes, touching "his dear friend"—"My uncle wished him good-bye only the night previous, when they all thought him better than he had

been for some time past, and never looked for such a speedy end. He had started for Venice on the Saturday morning, and that evening, after a ramble in a gondola, the telegram from Miss Lever was brought to him, and shocked him greatly. He started back for Trieste by steamer at midnight, and remained for the funeral." *

Like Thackeray and Macaulay, Lever died in his sleep. "When I saw him, two hours after death," writes one who possessed rare privileges, "he was still lying as in sleep, with his coat and vest off, his head resting on his right hand. Only for the shadow of death upon his calm countenance, it was hard to believe that he had gone from amongst us. He had, as all bear testimony who knew him intimately, a wonderful power of attaching you to him, and winning, not merely liking and regard, but actual love and affection. He left all his affairs in perfect order, even the amount to be expended on his burial, which was found in an envelope, with these words written in it, 'The modest sum I wish to be expended for my funeral.'"

The small *cortége* thus unostentatiously provided for might be seen with nodding black plumes wending its way, at six o'clock on the evening of June 3rd, to the British Cemetery at Trieste—typical in the hour of its

* Letter from William Blackwood, Esq., dated 45, George St., Edinburgh, June 7, 1872. A modest speech of Lever's has elsewhere appeared to the effect that he never wrote with facility. It is due to him to add the following testimony of Blackwood. "It is certain that Lever to the last would always answer to the call; and that he could safely be counted upon at the shortest notice for a story that would show slight traces of haste."

departure of Lever's removal in the evening of his life. It was not long before the fast approaching darkness that, quoting from Moore, he said—

"Give me back, give me back, the wild freshness of morning;"

but higher aspirations ascended from his lips, and made his death one of peace. His mortal part was thus laid low beside the remains of her "whose death had left him helpless," and adjoining the last resting-place of Winckelmann, murdered at Trieste by an Italian, whose cupidity he had excited by showing the gold medal he received in testimony of his talents. Let us hope that, like Lord Mayo and Curran, who also died in strange lands, Ireland may yet enshrine poor Lever's bones.

The news of his death had flashed startlingly through the new world almost as soon as it brought its shock to the old. England regarded him as the intimate of every home. Ireland felt that she had lost a gifted son. Dickens and Thackeray had just passed away, and the reading world could ill afford to lose him. The *Times* remarked that "Thousands of readers of all ages were deploring Lever's loss as a personal misfortune." The *Athenæum* said:—"Death has cut him down, ripe in years and culture; but who was yet green in heart and young in spirit and energy."*

* Despite the popularity of his books, Lever died far from rich. His property was sworn under £4000. How authors fail to make money has been explained by one of themselves, Mr. Reade. "Popular authors are rare; and even their income does not approach that of the prosperous lawyer, divine, physician, or actor. There are two actors who have each

His death took the world all the more by surprise, for until that despondent P.S. to "Kilgobbin," his brain had seemed full of fecundity; and critics vainly searched his works for trace of physical decay. Every page had been impregnated by the concentrated essence of vitality. A ghastly contrast was now presented by the bier, draped in black, on which the dead magician lay.

The garlands which hang upon the tombs of the dead should be of everlasting flowers. For this reason we transfer from an ephemeral existence some flowers which deserve a less perishable fate. "He never embodied an idea or wrote a paragraph which father need fear to place in his boy's hands, or which can be construed as conveying one impure innuendo, one bad afterthought. This is the great literary glory of the man; this constitutes the best and brightest laurel in the wreath which we lay upon his tomb."* Draw aside the curtain and Lever is not found revealed, like many great moral scribes who shall be nameless, a sham, and a *roué*. "I knew him," writes Major D——, "from the time he became his subsequent wife's lover. I am perfectly convinced that he was more practically pure in his life than any man with whom I was equally intimate."

He was her lover, it will be remembered, from boyhood, and his affection for the Major continued to the

made £150,000 by playing a single part in two plays for which the two authors have not received £2000. The painter has two great markets—his picture and his copyright. The author has but one. International copyright will merely give him two, and raise him to the painter's commercial level."

* *The Standard*, No. 14,929.

end. To this dear old friend, the eldest daughter and executrix of Lever, on the 17th July, 1872, writes :—

"I know well how sincerely my dear father returned you your affection, and, as you say, almost the last lines he wrote were to and for you. He died as he had lived, with his heart full of warmth and kindness, and his last hours were as bright and cheerful as his great weakness could allow ; he foresaw and rejoiced in the nearness of the end, for he was thoroughly tired, and longed for rest, and to rejoin *her*, without whom, as he always said to me, he could not live."*

Lever has been described as a "typical Irishman," but in point of fact no such character exists, and for this reason. There are to be found in Ireland a greater variety of races and intermixtures of races than in almost any other country in Europe ; and no individual belonging to any one of these very distinct races, can fairly be taken as a type of any other one. The great mass of the Irish exhibit indeed certain general characteristics, which, being easily seized on, are by superficial observers usually regarded as distinctive ones ; but, setting aside the vast differences of character that mark even the Celts of the north from those of the south, and these two peoples from the Celts of the east and west,

* "As to the memoirs of my dear father," she adds, "I feel sure you are the person he would have chosen for his biographer." The prodigal aid which we received in the present work from Major D—— will, after this confession, be appreciated. It may here be added, that the valued gift of Lever's writing-table and arm-chair were presented by his daughter, Mrs. Julia Kate Neville, to Trinity College, Dublin, in 1874.

what can be more dissimilar than the Hibernian Norman, the Cromwellian, or Williamite, Anglo-Saxon, and the more recent immigrations of those now known by the more general name of Englishmen? Lever was indeed a representative Irishman. He represented much more than outsiders can well understand, a large section of the Anglo-Irish element of the population; and, although the Celts and Irish Normans have also, from time to time, furnished very remarkable representative Irishmen, it must be admitted that the larger proportion of them have sprung from the ranks of the various sections of the Anglo-Irish race.

A complete list of Lever's books it needs that we should give.

"The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer," "Continental Gossipings" (never reprinted from the "D. University Magazine"), "Jack Hinton," "Tom Burke," "Arthur O'Leary," "The O'Donoghue," "The Knight of Gwynne," "Roland Cashel," "St. Patrick's Eve," "The Dodd Family Abroad," "Con Cregan," "One of Them," "The Barringtons," "A Rent in a Cloud," "Horace Templeton" (published anonymously), "Davenport Dunn," "Tales of the Trains," "Nuts and Nutcrackers," "The Martins of Cro' Martin," "Sir Jasper Carew," "Luttrell of Arran," "Maurice Tiernay, the Soldier of Fortune," "Gerald Fitzgerald," "Sir Brook Fossbrooke," "That Boy of

Norcotts," "The Bramleighs," "Tony Butler," "Paul Goslett's Confessions,"* "Cornelius O'Dowd," "A Day's Ride," "Lord Kilgobbin."

Viewing Lever's dashing progress through this long line of stirring scenes, in which, with a glow of triumph on his cheeks, he clears hitches like ditches and wins, we may compare his career to that of a man who plunges into a race, leaves competitors behind, and, amid the applause of thousands, comes in with buoyant ease. To be able to dismount quietly when the race of life is done, and after its "fitful fever" to sink calmly to rest at last, is not always vouchsafed to humanity.

Allibone, in his great "Critical Dictionary," pronounces as Lever's "The Commissioner, or De Lunatico Inquirendo." But with the exception of the Preface, it should be placed with G. P. R. James's works. This eminent authority also claims for Lever "The Nevilles of Garretstown," "The Mystic Vial," and "The Hero of Randolph Abbey," and, after giving the usual list of his works, remarks that a number of others might be added, not openly acknowledged as his. But as regards "The Nevilles," Lever informed Canon Hayman, on July 8th, 1843, that the book was not his. "He had seen some chapters here and there—*voilà tout!*"†

* This book, but little known, is—Chapman & Hall inform us—out of print.

† But from a document written eleven years after, it appears that he had a pecuniary interest in "The Nevilles." Mr. Hayman, who was attached to the Magazine in which "The Nevilles" appeared, writes: "I do not know that I cared to ask for the authorship of 'The Nevilles.' Men-

On the other hand, the parentage of "Kilgobbin" has to some extent been questioned, but the claimant's account needs not serious refutation. His story, however, is quite as amusing as that of "Kilgobbin" itself.*

Some critics have noticed the absence of fastidious taste by which the earlier of Lever's works are marked; but we are bound to say that his hatred of sentimentality and false writing is always conspicuous; and nowhere are we led to breathe an atmosphere of impurity. Love-making galore, we have no doubt; but it is honest and legitimate love-making at all times and under every circumstance. The best proof that his writings—even the earlier, and those which display most *abandon*—contain naught that is naughty may be found in the fact

tally I assigned the work to the writer of 'The Cock and Anchor,' a novel brought out by Curry in 1845." The author of the latter book was J. S. Lefanu, who, from the letter elsewhere given, seems to have had the slightest possible acquaintance with Lever at the time "The Nevilles" came out. A cousin of Lever's informs us that the writer he believes to have been Dr. Mortimer O'Sullivan; but the Rev. John Lever is not unlikely the author.

* A highly distinguished clergyman writes to us from St. Andrews, Scotland, March the 3rd, 1873:—"The traces of Lever's hand in 'Kilgobbin' seem very plain. But a young man in Edinburgh has given out that he is in fact the author of 'Lord Kilgobbin.' He says that he wrote a good many of the earlier chapters, as they came out in the 'Cornhill;' and that then, having to go to India, he sold his work, so far as it was done, together with a sketch of what was to follow, to the proprietors of the magazine, who then employed Lever to finish it; the Edinburgh man not knowing till the book was completed and published, that Lever was the man who finished it.

"It is certainly hard if a man like Lever is to be represented as dressing himself in borrowed plumes, which never mortal less needed to do."

The claim, to carry any weight, should have been made in the lifetime of Lever. A perusal of his private letters during the progress of "Kilgobbin" leaves no room to doubt that he alone was the author of it—apart from the internal evidence which reveals its paternity.

that ladies—even prudish old maids—greatly liked them. Miss Edgeworth was delighted: Miss Mitford speaks of them as "charming." On the whole, there are few fiction writers of equal fecundity against whom so little can be said. If his heroes of the Lorrequer type are undeserving of our imitation, his heroines go far to realize "a perfect woman nobly planned." True the Dalrymple girls in Cork, formerly of Corfu, are painted as designing adventuresses; but they are not of Irish birth. Baby Blake in "O'Malley" is no doubt depicted as a romp, but her exuberance arose from her innocence, and when Lady Morgan drew a heroine, which she deemed specially charming,—in fact, a photo of herself—she deemed it no disparagement to style her "The Wild Irish girl." A beautifully effective contrast to Baby Blake is presented in another Galway girl, Louisa Bellew. Her grace and refinement lead us to love her from the moment we are introduced. An accomplished nun could not give Jack Hinton the guardsman more spiritualized advice, and we feel all the better for the Christian philosophy which, clothed in unstudied words, fall from her cherry lips. On the other hand, no disposition can be more unlike Louisa Bellew's than that of Lucy Dashwood, strongly as we are fascinated by her. But Kate Dodd, in the "Dodd Family," was, he often said, his favourite girl. His heroines, as a general rule, are lovable, lovely, loving, and loved. Strategists in capturing husbands, Lever does, certainly, sometimes paint his womankind; but this seems part of the

marital-bias of his nature, and it has been wittily said by a critic, "If, indeed, modern mothers and daughters are only half as knowing, vigilant, and unscrupulous in their designs upon that portion of humanity, who have not only breeches, but breeches-pockets, no bachelor can have a chance against the female foe; all unmarried men are marching through an enemy's country, in which they must expect at every step to have their flank turned by some astute matrimonial manœuvre." This —clearly a cut at the Dalrymples—must be taken *cum grano;* and we have only to repeat that the best visions of the sex are in the spirit of Chaucer's "good woman."

Of Lever's later books, the "Dodd Family" and "Roland Cashel" are perhaps the best. They show great power of observation, and abound in passages of incontrovertible philosophy. His earlier efforts were not wanting in philosophy either; but they aimed hardly higher than the wisdom of making the best of good and bad fortune; while at the same time inculcating, as almost the whole duty of man, fidelity in love and gallantry in war. One practical effect they certainly exercised. "One day Lever said to me," writes Harry Innes, "that many a dashing dragoon O'Malley and Tom Burke added to her Majesty's service; and if cavalry regiments were made to consist of four hundred officers and thirty privates, there would have been a fair field for their usefulness, and all honours would doubtless have been theirs; 'but unfortunately,' said he, 'the figures ran exactly the other way.' He did not

think the work touched the classes from which the rank and file of the service were drawn; their thoughts usually were of free kits, bounties, beer-money, and the Peel penny." *

Lever's own life practically proved the sincerity of his written views. He had two generations of readers differing essentially in taste and ideas; but his books, unlike the houses of cards which so many novelists of the day raised only to fall flat after a brief season, have held their ground well, and will last like the novels of Smollett and Fielding. Some people have tried to cry down Lever as superficial; but we cannot forget that even of Fielding, Johnson remarked that "he knew the shell of life only." This was said of the greatest English novelist: and Lever, too, did not care to grope in depths. His gifts were perhaps more superficial than those of Thackeray or Dickens; but this circumstance his admirers need not deplore. Few cared to take the trouble of penetrating into the deeper depths of Dickens' fancy or the under-current of Thackeray's dark philosophy; while Lever's sallies were appreciated on the instant even by children, and at all times rapturously encored.

"Blackwood" well remarked of Lever, that "it was good to be the favourite of youth—good to awake the eager interest, the laugh which rings from the heart." His weakness lay in plan. He was too open to be a good plotter, and too dashing to consume time in elabo-

* Letter from H. Innes, Esq., Thomastown, May 1, 1879.

ration. When he came to a difficulty he never paused at the brink, but went clean over it, like one of those wonderful Connemara nags of which we read in "O'Malley." His style of progress was like that of the high-blooded horse. He died on the field, and in the midst of his bold action—as he prayed to die. He hated the idea of becoming a broken-down hack with attenuated flanks and whistling wheeze.

When Canning put into the mouth of his "Knife-grinder,"—"Story! God bless you, I've none to tell," he made a confession which some of our most popular story-tellers might with honesty offer. "As for story, I never pretend to any," the Major is informed. "My highest aim is to bring some people together, and make them *talk*, if not *well*, at least *life-like*, and as real creatures might. That I take pains to do this for a public that a few nights back, at the representation of one of Wycherly's comedies, called for the author, shows me to be an honest workman, and anxious to sell honestly-done work, though I may have my misgivings as to the taste or the critical skill of the purchaser."

In dialogue his great strength lay. "Kilgobbin" he considered showed the best sample of it. This may be greatly due to the fact that at Trieste he had no opportunity of giving oral vent; so that when he took pen in hand it was like the steel with which champagne is liberated: out gushed a genial flow effervescing in pleasant and brilliant sparkles. His mastery of dialogue was proved by the ease with which he made characters

describe themselves without any laboured painting on his part, and by a complete avoidance of those telling catchwords which in the drama, and even in the works of Dickens, are employed. A sound essayist, Mr. Hutton, regards the dialogues in Lever's novels as so good that "they are no more like real talk in real society than the conversation in Sheridan's plays, in which everybody is a fairy who speaks pearls." There is this difference, however, between Lever and Sheridan: the first threw off his talk without an effort: the second took a quarter of a century in elaborating and recasting his dialogue in "The School for Scandal."

When Thackeray died, his fame—with ladies—was on the wane. They complained that in "Esmond" and later books he fell into a tone of undue familiarity with his reader. "When a man does this in society," they said, "we snub him; in a book we must needs submit to it!" Lever was on his guard against this error especially in his later works: he continued a favourite to the last. His books with one exception—and it is not certain that he really wrote the "Rent"—displayed no gradual failure of power, as in the case of some great novelists whom it might seem invidious to name. The literary star of Lever never dimmed. Croker once said of another, that he went up like a rocket, and came down like its stick. Lever indeed did come down like a stick; but it was in the shape of an Irish black-thorn, with which he thrashed vice and folly. His energy was honest and above board. He never used a dirk dipped in gall.

But while Lever raised his arm in his own pleasant way, and as Lysaght said of the Irishman in his glory, "for love knocking down

"With his sprig of shillelah and shamrock so green,"

he built, at the same time, a rich storehouse of healthy amusement for his age, uniformly taking the jolly rather than the jaundiced view of human nature; and his death excited an outburst of emotional feeling which Thackeray's, sudden as it was, failed to evoke.

"Steadily and conspicuously his star has continued in the ascendant," writes one who with no honeyed words has often criticised men of mark. "Lever is just the same novelist and the same man to the rising generation as he was to the generation which is now risen. Popularity such as this, so well earned, so wholesome, so constant, so brilliant, is rare indeed. As for the new order of novelists, they come and go. The successes of one season are forgotten the next, and the fictions which created a *furore* in the past year have faded out of recollection in the present. But the novels of Charles Lever hold their place, and they will continue to hold it." In analytic power, such as Balzac wielded, Thackeray eclipsed Lever; in indefatigable vigilance of trivial traits, noted with irresistible humour, Dickens surpassed him. "But he possessed," adds the same shrewd critic, "certain literary qualities which both Dickens and Thackeray were without—a brilliancy of dash, a rapidity of movement, an unflagging vivacity of spirit

that are absolutely unique in the library of British fiction."

Thus passed from us, in exile, this brilliant man of letters. In his character were many different elements combined. He had the fearlessness of manhood, softened by woman's sensibility and purity, with the exuberance of life belonging to a boy. He possessed marvellous powers of fascination, attracting to him, and straightway converting into friends for a lifetime, men of different stations and moulds. The peer, the fellow of college, the judge, the country squire, the parson, the doctor, the statesman, the lawyer, the *littérateur*, the lowly peasant both in Italy and at home, alike appreciated him. Of his genius we have sought in these pages to supply sufficient illustration. Indulgence is asked for shortcomings in his biographer, of which he is but too sensible. His own, such as they were, bore their bitter fruit; nor can we envy the bystander who would now make curious inquiry into them, for Lever "is in his grave" and

"After Life's fitful fever he sleeps well."

THE PORTFOLIO.

I.—THE MISCARRIAGE OF FOUR CHAPTERS OF "LORREQUER"

IN THE EMBASSY BAG FROM BRUSSELS.

(Vol. I., p. 223.)

THE late Mr. James McGlashan—Lever's literary censor throughout the progress of "Harry Lorrequer"—declared that the chapters which never appeared in print owing to their miscarriage, had much the advantage of those that he hastily substituted for them. When the missing chapters came to light, long after, McGlashan got them carefully bound, and duly labelled in letters of gold, of which a full account is given by Lever in the last edition of "Lorrequer," dated 1861, as kindly communicated by W. H. Smith & Son. This records: "When I was last in Ireland [1854] I saw it on the shelves of my friend's bookcase, and had the pleasure of hearing him say that he preferred it to that which had appeared in print."

CHAPTER LI.

THE following morning I took an affectionate leave of my kind friends, with the hope of an early meeting, and set off for Munich. "Don't forget that Baer is your hotel; and Schnetz, the tailor, in the Grünen Strasse, will furnish you with everything necessary for the ball," said Jack Waller, as I drove from the door, burning with impatience to reach the end of my journey.

As my *calèche* rattled along, my musings were divided between my own fate and that of the friends behind me, and gladly would I have compromised all the proud elevation which a connection with the Callonbys was certain to confer for the security of being the husband of the girl I loved, even though like Waller my lot was to be the denizen of a lonely château, an exile from my home and my country. I could not help also wondering at the sudden revolution accomplished by his altered circumstances to my once gay and reckless friend; for although still much of his buoyant temperament, and all his warm-hearted joviality remained, yet reverses had taught him prudence and foresight, and the neck-or-nothing Jack was now transformed into a clear-sighted and well-judging man of the world.

How would Harry Lorrequer have come through such a trial as his, had he been the lucky man, upon that eventful morning, was a question I more than once asked myself, but without the power to return a very flattering reply. I turned from these thoughts to the present—the present, with all its excitement, all its emergency; and as the tall spires rose above the sandy plain, and indicated my approach to Munich, my heart felt sad and desponding, the sanguine courage I have ever looked upon as a sure forerunner of success was not mine, and I almost hesitated about proceeding. If a few short miles, if a few brief hours only separate me from the sentence which dooms me to unhappiness for life, why go on? Is not the delusion, with all its anxieties, its

torments, preferable to a hopeless despondency? How often have I thought of him who burst into tears at hearing that the story he believed true, and the hero he supposed real, were but imaginary; and how thoroughly did I now recur to the anecdote, and sympathise in the bitter sorrow of his reproach to his informant: "It may be as you tell me, but would you had not said it. You have destroyed the brightest pleasure of my existence."

Then, again, I recurred to all the suffering of my uncertain fortune; the sleepless nights and anxious days; the calculating of chances that never arose; the anticipation of events that were now destined never to occur; and I doubted if any result could bring more unhappiness.

If the sun and sky, the balmy air, and the cheerful note of the lark could have roused me from my musings, I should not have felt sad, as suddenly turning an angle of the road, my postilion pointed with his whip beneath him, and called out "München!" In less than a quarter of an hour we entered the city, and after the usual ordeal of narrow lanes and poverty-stricken streets, by which it seems the *rigueur* to make the approach to every capital in Europe, we crossed the Platz, and drew up at the ample portal of the "Baer."

"And this is the 'Baer,'" said I, as I disengaged my legs from their narrow resting-place, and sprung to the ground.

"Ya, mein Herr," said the largest mass of German manhood that ever was fattened upon beet-root and boiled

beef, as, with a white napkin fastened like a herald's tabard, and a carving knife long as a sword of the fifteenth century, he stood panting before me; for having hastily risen from dinner to welcome me, he was considerably blown by his exertions. While I briefly surveyed the enormous human sausage before me, he had put two or three queries to the postilion, whose answers, whatever they were, seemed considerably to abate the warmth of his first reception; and after a hurried direction to the ostler about the horses, he most unceremoniously turned his back, and waving his knife, motioned off the swarm of waiters, as, without bestowing any further attention on me, he waddled once more back to the dinner-room. So ludicrous did this sudden change in his demeanour strike me, that I felt much more disposed to laugh than to be angry at it; and resolving that however little he coveted my society, I was at least determined upon bestowing it upon him, I strode boldly forwards, and guided by the goodly savour of the fattest and greasiest cuisine out of Greenland, made my way to the "Saal."

As I looked about at the long and well-filled table, where no one showed any inclination to make room for me, and where the host himself, now engaged in all the pomp and circumstance of distributing slices of veal stewed with cherries and molasses, did not even deign to notice me, I began to feel somewhat chagrined and annoyed. Whatever these people have got in their heads about me, I must confess the Strasburghers have much the advantage of them. Such was my first reflection.

My second was that it were far better to see what a couple of florins might do with the waiter, than to remain an unengaged spectator of the scene before me. The plan succeeded, for the worthy functionary seizing a chair, thrust it boldly between two very busily-occupied individuals; and half upsetting one and transferring the other very nearly into his neighbour's lap, I obtained a ground-work for my operations, though scarcely with the goodwill and wishes of my companions on either hand. A plate of soup, resembling in colour and odour a certain little muddy stream near Dublin and known as the Dodder, was speedily placed before me, and though the austere and ever frowning aspect of the host bespoke anything more than welcome, I called for a flask of Rhein wine, and nodding to him familiarly, drank to his health, not without, however, venting a malediction on the liquor, the most execrable I ever drank, and which was listened to by neighbours with a look of anger that boded disturbance. This trivial circumstance I merely mention as a kind of warning to young travellers, never to betray severe opinions at any German table d'hôte; the chances being strongly in favour of the fact that the gentleman with the cordon in his coat on your right hand supplied the wine, while he with a star upon your left furnished the cutlery, the very soldier-like moustached hero opposite having contributed the mustard, and so on. The only individual unengaged in traffic present being probably a mean-looking, long-haired, round-shouldered, snuff-begrimed personage, whom you

find to your amazement is the prince of something unspeakable, with more quarterings on his escutcheon than he has francs in his pocket.

When dinner was at length concluded, I took the waiter aside, and demanded what might be the meaning of the host's singular conduct. With a cunning leer, and a slight shrug, the fellow replied that his master always indulged his humour; that he was rich; that, in fact, he never was cool to anyone, except when it pleased himself.

"All very respectable—very proper, doubtless," said I; "but then as I am a perfect stranger to him, how comes it that he has so eminently distinguished me by his dislike?"

"Why I believe that is mere disappointment—nothing else."

"Disappointment—how can that be?"

"You must know, then, that for the last three days we have been expecting the new English *Chargé d'affaires*. Rooms have been engaged for him in the hotel, relays of horses are waiting for him on the road, and yet there seems no appearance of his arrival; but as every *calèche* comes up to the door the Herr Ludwig runs out just as you saw him; and then the moment he learns that the traveller is not the person expected, he turns his back and leaves him exactly as he treated you. All I fear is that if the English lord comes back before the ambassador that he may meet the same treatment."

"Who is the lord you speak of?"

"Mi Lord Callonby. Ach Gott! how rich he is!"

said the fellow, throwing up his eyes, and smacking his lips.

"And does Lord Callonby stop here?"

"To be sure, mein Herr! He has resided here five weeks, until he took his excursion to Saltzburgh; but we expect him back this evening."

"This evening—you are certain of that?"

"Quite sure. We are busy this moment in getting his apartments ready, putting flowers in the vases. How much they think of flowers—particularly the young lady that was sick."

"Sick! Which, for heaven's sake? The tallest, the handsomest—"

"Ya, ya! The tallest—the young lady the king said was the 'schönste Mädchen in Bayern.' And she is too!"

"You are right, my good fellow, and here is a napoleon to drink her health. How well does the King of Bavaria deserve the reputation he has through Europe!" I muttered to myself. "He is certainly the most cultivated monarch of modern times: but you said she was sickly—nothing to speak of—eh?"

"Oh! not now; she is quite recovered—rides one of the king's horses every day, and goes to the *chasse* with the Crown Prince."

"Ah, indeed," said I musingly. "Well, then, Antoine, that's your name, eh?—well then, let me have my room got ready as soon as possible, and send a commissionnaire with me to the house of Schnetz the tailor."

"Ah, my good sir! we can give you no room; the

whole of the hotel is divided between the English lord and the *Chargé d'affaires;* and we refused a place yesterday to the Pope's Nuncio."

"Come, come, I must have a room here—even one will do. Arrange it for me how you can—but do it—and depend upon me for the recompense."

"Perhaps I could manage to give you one of the *Chargé d'affaires'* apartments without the host's knowledge; but you must promise to keep it a secret from everyone. Herr Ludwig will never find it out himself; he has not been up those stairs there since the French mission."

"Yes! Yes! I'll not speak of it; and now dispatch this note to Count Beningsen"—it was one from Waller to procure me a ticket for the masquerade—"and I shall amuse myself with a stroll through the town." So saying, I walked leisurely from the inn, resolving that my first step should be to visit Herr Schnetz before I indulged my curiosity with any of the sights of Munich.

In a small, obscure and dingy street stood the celebrated "Magasin" of the first tailor in Bavaria. The great maestro of hussar dolmarins and lancer pelisses was in himself a small long-bodied, short-limbed animal, like a beetle upon his hind legs; he stood in the midst of a busily occupied staff of workmen, all working away at the gala suits, and embroidered jackets, which were to figure away that evening at the Hoff Bal.

A few words explained to the intelligent proprietor the object of my visit, and in a moment he proceeded

to pass in review before me a variety of costumes from which I was at liberty to select. Any uniform whatever being court-dress on an occasion like the present, fortunately for me the one I pitched upon was a blue coat with so little lace and embroidery, that it did not require much time to get in readiness; as otherwise the hours were so few—that Herr Schnetz could not have been able to provide me.

"Well then, Monsieur will wear blue, with gold epaulettes, and braiding the collars and cuffs, brodé en——"

"Whatever your good taste may decide," said I, anxious to close the negotiation; "only pray remember that I am only desirous to have a well-fitting and well-looking garment, and not anxious about any unusual decoration."

"I understand, perfectly," said he, "and at eight o'clock I shall be with you."

"At eight then," said I, as I made the last of the four bows that brought me to the door-sill, and enabled me to make my adieus to Herr Schnetz with a very faint resemblance of his own courtly demeanour.

CHAPTER LII.

In the time I now write of, Munich possessed few, if any, of the attractions it now boasts. Its magnificent collections of Art did not exist; and the palace, which at this moment forms one of the most splendid sights in Europe,

was not even begun ; and the traveller who now admires the beautiful architecture of the picture gallery and the spacious areas of the squares and streets, can form no conception of the mass of narrow and gloomy streets which only twenty years ago formed the capital of Bavaria.

If the ennui I felt on that long and seemingly interminable afternoon were, however, to be traced to its true source, I feel obliged to acknowledge, that in reality, less is attributable to Munich than the frame of mind I suffered from despondency, verging upon despair, at the wildness of the project I was engaged in, being now the uppermost thought of my mind. More than once I ruminated over the wide gulf that separated me in life from her I loved. I ardently wished that fortune had thrown my lot in those bold and warlike feudal times, when a rash and chivalrous deed of arms won ever a safe passport to a lady's favour and the approval of her friends. Now, alas! civilization had erased every trace of such a possibility, and a clerk in the post-office had as many opportunities of distinguishing himself as a sub. in the —th. I might be as conversant with the eighteen manœuvres, as the Bishop of London was with the Thirty-nine Articles. I might have as correct an eye for the sit of a cross-belt, or the bang of a bayonet, as any drill-sergeant that ever caned a recruit. I might mount guard with a step as martial, and an air as warlike as ever raw ensign assumed on a back guard. But great and meritorious as such gifts in reality might be, I

much feared that they might prove but small recommendations to a fair lady's love, and the good graces of her father, a peer of the realm. "Confound it!" said I, "any chance of becoming *renommé* now-a-days, is gone by; and one may grow grey in the service without notice, unless for the paltry distinction of being occasionally tried by court-martial, and broke for disobedience of orders. When I had sufficiently condoled with myself upon this subject, I began to regret the fact of my country. If I were anything but an Englishman now, thought I, how easily would all my embarrassments give way. A Frenchman in my position would carry off Lady Jane, shoot Kilkee, poison Lady Callonby, and then go to bed with a charcoal-fire beside him, and form a magnificent advertisement for the *causes célèbres* in the next edition. Even a stupid German would be better off than I am; for after facilitating the lady's marriage with his rival, he would adopt a "*grande passion*" for the rest of his days, make all three miserable, pass his *soirées* in counselling the fair one to commit suicide, and conclude the romance by publishing a history of his life and opinions in the *Weimar Œstaleïchen Review*, at three florins a column. Whereas I was destined on some fine morning to be sent for to Lord Callonby's own room, and hear a very imposing treatise upon the duties of fathers, mothers, daughters, and first cousins: how the relationships forbid intermarriages by the rubric: have a very lively picture of my own humble position contrasted with Lady Jane's brilliant one:

and finally get the option of acting a lie, by associating with the girl I love on terms of distant acquaintance, and being politely admonished that the sooner I joined my regiment the better for his Majesty's service, and the peace and happiness of some of his lieges.

It was now drawing towards evening, and I turned once more towards the "Baer." On entering the porch I found Antoine waiting for me; who pressing his finger upon his lips, begging silence, conducted me up the ample stairs, along a spacious corridor, and at last ushered me into a well furnished and most comfortable looking chamber, with a blazing wood-fire, and a table laid out for supper. "Here then," said he, "you can remain, for although the room forms one of the *Chargé d'affaires'* apartments, he'll never miss it, and as you are a friend of Lord Callonby's, you have only to cross the corridor to his chambers." The waiter, whom a little bribery had completely brought over to my interests, soon provided me with a very appetizing little supper, and a very respectable bottle of Burgundy, and having again entreated me not to ring the bell, but wait for his coming from time to time, left me.

As I sipped my wine, and threw another log upon the fire, my frame of mind grew gradually more tinged with hope. I walked up and down the room, inventing a thousand different situations in which I might be placed, and coining innumerable difficulties for the sake of practising escapes from them: at last the roll of wheels up the *pavé* interrupted my reverie—the noise came

nearer and nearer—now I could distinguish the trot of the horses: and from the clatter they made, I judged there must be at least two carriages. Then went the crack, crack of the postilion's whip: and now at some distance behind him, another took up the signal. I opened the window, but all without was so dark, I could see nothing. The noise however, came every instant closer, and from the incessant din the postilion kept up, there could be no doubt of its being an arrival. At length they turned the corner and entered the Platz, and were driving along towards the "Baer." "Here they are," said I aloud, "here they come. Oh! that I could anticipate the fortune that awaits me. Oh! that I could, if destined to succeed, rush forward to meet her, and in one embrace, forget all the tortures of suspense."

As the wide portals of the *porte cochère* were thrown open, and the first carriage rolled heavily in, and was hidden from my view, my sensations nearly overpowered me. I now rushed to the door, and opening it I listened with a beating heart for the voices whose well-remembered tones I longed for; but such were the din and clamour I could distinguish nothing. At length a foot mounted the stairs, and came along the corridor. It was Antoine. "Well," said I, half-breathless with agitation, "Antoine, well, are they come? is it they?" "This way, your Excellency!" said Antoine to some one who followed him, as at the same instant he motioned to me to retire and close the door. I stepped back, and holding the door ajar, listened. The footsteps came nearer, and after a

moment's delay, a door was unlocked, opened, and the person entered; before I could hear more, Antoine put his head into my room, and whispered, "the *Chargé d'affaires* has arrived, be still." So saying, he disappeared, leaving me to vent on the innocent and unoffending diplomate as heavy a malediction for the disappointment as ever descended upon the head of a son of the Foreign Office.

I looked at my watch, it was already eight o'clock; at nine I had ordered the carriage to convey me to the Hoff Saal, and yet the Callonbys had not arrived. Sometimes I resolved upon remaining where I was, till they did come; then again I remembered how Waller apprised me that the etiquette required the guests to be assembled in the ball-room before the arrival of the King. Any one who came later was usually in the suite of some member of the royal family, and as the prince Max was with the Callonbys, it was open to them to make their appearance when they pleased. Later than nine, I dare not delay my departure; so that go at once I must. While I thus reflected, a gentle tap was heard at the door. I opened and perceived my punctual friend Mr. Schnetz, who held a bundle under either arm, one of which he deposited upon a chair; and apologizing for his inability to wait and inspect the trying on of his handiwork, he bowed reverentially and departed. "Now then for it," said I as I undid the parcel, not without a consciousness of how much importance even so small a matter as the fit of my

coat might prove where I was once more about to try my fortune.

"The worthy tailor has not obtained his repute without desert:" was my first observation, as I surveyed myself in a long glass. The fit was perfect, and the style of the dress singularly gentlemanlike and handsome. A blue coat with heavy epaulettes buttoned closely up, the collar and cuffs richly embroidered with gold laurel leaves on a scarlet ground, the trowsers, such as only are to be had in Germany, were admirably cut, and the broad gold stripe also laid upon a scarlet ground, gave a richness and lightness to the whole costume that made me perfectly satisfied that the outward man might pass muster without fearing comparison with the subjects of his Bavarian Majesty: a plain cocked-hat and feather, with a sword and sword-belt, were not forgotten by the estimable Schnetz, to whom, as I bowed to myself before the looking-glass, I inwardly promised a handsome recompense on the morning of my wedding.

"The card of the ball," said Antoine, placing a letter on my table. "Ach Gott! but the Herr looks well. But your spurs are forgotten. How are you ever to waltz—much less galop—without spurs?"

"True," said I, sympathising in a difficulty I had not felt—"true, Antoine. Run, then, quickly over to Schnetz; he has everything, of course; and mind, not a minute's delay."

Away went Antoine, and once more I was alone. Having buckled on my sword-belt, and adjusted the

feather of my chapeau, I was practising once more a salute, half-respectful, half-devoted, when my door opened, and a Chasseur in full livery put in his head, and looked about him. Before I had time to inquire what he meant he was gone. In less than five minutes a smart knock at the door aroused me, and at the same time a gentleman entered, covered entirely in a mantle, which he took off, and displayed beneath a very magnificent Court dress, with at least a dozen orders and decorations glittering upon it.

"Will you forgive this hurried and unceremonious call, *mon cher?*" said he, and he extended to me both his hands, while he very leisurely—I must confess the truth—saluted me on either cheek. ("It is Jack's friend Benningsen," thought I; "and a very polite attention too.") "I only this instant heard of your arrival, and am delighted to find that you are not too tired to come out."

"On the contrary," said I, "I feel perfectly rested, and anticipate much pleasure from the ball."

"Well, then, I'll not stay longer now, for I must hasten to his Majesty. May I mention your arrival? Why—I really—of course you know best—but I don't see—that is—— Ah! I perceive you like a little *coup de théâtre!*" said he, smiling, "so I shall keep your secret. *Au revoir*, then." So saying, he again squeezed my hands and disappeared. Scarcely was he out of the room, than again the door opened, and he put in his head. "Pardon, *mon cher*, but how is Lord Aberdeen?"

"Lord Aberdeen!" said I, laughing—"Lord Aberdeen? Quite well, I trust, but——" Before I finished the door was shut to, and I heard his foot descending the staircase.

"What the devil does he mean by asking me how is Lord Aberdeen? By Jove, he might as well expect me to answer for the Great Mogul! My dear Jack, I'm greatly afraid your excellent friend's head is not exactly as collected as it might be. But here comes Antoine with the spurs. Now then, be quiet; it is almost nine, and then order up the carriage."

"It is at the door already, mein Herr. The whole street is blocked up; and, would you believe it? the new Ambassador won't go; he is in bed already."

Without waiting to hear Antoine's comments upon the singularity of a man who preferred a sleep to Strauss's waltzes, I sprung into the *calèche*, and set out for the ball.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE BALL.

My friends will vouch for me that I am no "laudator temporis acti"—in fact, even my reader knows that an ounce of the present has ever weighed with me as fully equal to a pound of the past. Still, when I look back to the brilliant sight that met my eyes that evening

on entering the ball-room at Munich, I am bound to confess I have never before, nor have I ever since, witnessed its equal. The room itself, a very spacious and lofty rotunda, was brilliantly illuminated, and crowded with above a thousand persons, whose dresses were characteristic of nearly every nation of the globe. The Bavarian women, who, besides being better featured than most other Germans, are superior to all in carriage and deportment; the men, magnificently dressed in all the glitter of Hussar uniform and scarcely less brilliant Court costumes, are fine, well-looking, soldier-like fellows, who strode about with their fair partners upon their arms, and whirled them along in the wild mazes of a Hungarian galop, their spurs clinking to the inspiriting crash of an orchestra that would have made gout itself forget its torments, and try a "pirouette en Taglioni." And here let me add that he who has not seen waltzing in Munich or Vienna knows nothing whatever of the beauty of the dance. Individuals he may have met with as perfect waltzers as any to be found there, but to witness the perfection of the waltz he must see three or four hundred moving together in regular rhythm to the exciting strain of a Ländler, every foot coming down together evenly-evenly, which seemed like the result of some magic power; and the music itself, which, changing from fast to slow, and then to fast again, carries them along with it, as if unconsciously; and when suddenly the crash of the orchestra ceases, like spell-bound mortals, they stand motionless, not a hand, not a foot stirring,

till, like a thunder-clap, the music bursts out into the maddening and impetuous tramp, tramp of a galopade, and away they go, shaking the floor beneath them as they beat time to the music. This is indeed dancing, and even to witness it carries the spectator along with the wildest enthusiasm. Such was the sight now presented to my eyes as I entered the ball-room, and I was not long in feeling its influence.

"Now then for a partner," thought I, as I turned from one side to the other, where crowds of pretty-looking girls were standing in expectation of being asked to dance. While I was puzzling myself as to the manner in which to make my advances, my friend of the hotel came forward. "Ah!" thought I, "there is Benningsen; he'll arrange it for me."

"Monsieur le Comte," said I, approaching, "may I trespass upon your kindness?"

"Ah, *mon cher collègue!* I have just been in search of you. You must not remain down here. Have you been presented?"

"Presented?" said I. "No! To the King, do you mean?"

"Of course. Come after me. He knows that you are here, so lose no time."

"The devil he does!" thought I. "What a little gossiping place it must be, that so humble a man as Harry Lorrequer's arrival is worth telling to his Majesty!"

I had very little time for further reflection, for the

Count hurried me on through the crowd, talking the entire time.

"You came by Paris?"

"Yes."

"I was there for some time. Oh! I know you were attached there!"

"Eh!" said I, blushing slightly as I muttered to myself, "confound me, if the old fellow doesn't seem to know my whole history. I hope to mercy, he'll not tell his Majesty any minute particulars." "It is only fair, I should tell you," said he dropping his voice, "the Duke of Wellington has spoken very well of you in his late letter to the King—"

"He has; has he. Oh I see now," thought I, "why they're all so civil." That the illustrious Duke should have even thought of, much less written about me, ceased to surprise me now, as every moment teemed with new wonders. It was true I had been presented to him some years before, and I had often heard he never forgot a person that he casually met with."

"He thinks," continued the count; still in a whisper—"He thinks you'll be able to do something with Russia." Here he put his finger to his nose, and I looked indescribably sage and sapient. To this I replied by another look, twice as cunning as his own, but not exactly knowing since when I had become the friend of the Czar, I did not venture a reply. "Our only regret is that you are soon to leave us," continued he; "but we know they can't spare you at home."

"Oh, as for that matter," said I smiling, "I don't think my absence will cause much inconvenience."

"The Duke thinks otherwise," said he, shaking his head dubiously.

"Oh! then in that case—"

"Ah! pardon for an instant—are you acquainted with the Baron Von Ovechausen, *il est des vôtres.* You must know him."

Here he presented me to a very pompous-looking personage in a light blue uniform, who called me your Excellency at each word. "We have ever heard much of your Excellency," said he, "and I need not say how gratified we are to have the opportunity of making your acquaintance."

I professed the most sincere sense of the obligation his speech conferred, and resolving that the mysticism should not all proceed from one side, hinted that the worthy Baron's name was a well-known one in England.

"I trust it is," said he with an air of some *empressement*, as he presented his snuff box.

"Most sorry am I to interrupt you," said the Count, returning breathlessly to where we stood, "but his Majesty's orders are to present our friend here immediately."

"In the present state of matters," said the Count, with a look of indescribable sagacity, "In the present state of matters—it will be as well not to allude to the affairs of the East with his Majesty."

"Trust me," said I, "not a syllable."

After a very severe struggle through the crowd, during which I underwent a close examination from the bright eyes of the München damsels, who certainly seemed to regard me in the light of a notoriety, we at length reached the Estrade where the king stood, with a splendidly dressed staff of about a dozen persons around him. I had scarcely time to remark the tall handsome figure of the Monarch, who though without decided pretensions to good looks, has still a frank and manly expression that never fails to please. When my friend the Count presented me—as hitherto I had not heard how he had been designating me—I listened closely to distinguish the words, but in vain; he spoke rapidly and in a low voice, and all was lost to my ears.

"You have had a pleasant journey, I hope," said his Majesty, with a most bland smile.

I assented with a bow, and he continued, "you'll not find Munich, I fear, as agreeable as Paris?" This was said with a tone of slight raillery, that showed me at once his Majesty alluded to Emily Bingham. I stammered out some profession of my hopes to the contrary, when he observed:—"My Lord Callonby—I suppose you know him—is here, and his house is, I understand, a most delightful one."

"How devilish close he is pushing me," thought I, as I replied that Lord Callonby was a very old friend of mine and his daughter too.

"Why, really, much as your countrywomen are cele-

brated for beauty, I scarcely even remember meeting as handsome an Englishwoman as Lady —— How do you call the taller of the two."

"I believe the elder Lady Jane Callonby is the one your Majesty alludes to."

"Yes, you are quite right." Here the King addressed some observation to one of his suite, which enabled me to draw breath after the canter he had given me.

"His Excellency would wish to dance, perhaps," said the King, looking towards the Grand Mareschal. Although my sprained ankle gave me some slight uneasiness, I preferred anything to a longer continuance of the prying system of his Majesty's cross-examination, and assented. In a moment after I was presented in all form to one of the archduchesses, and soon found myself figuranting away, the very lion of the "Hoff Saal." Scarcely was the quadrille over, when I was surrounded by numerous individuals, all eagerly pressing forward to make my acquaintance; and in less than ten minutes I had become the dear friend of some thirty persons with hieroglyphic names, and accepted invitations enough to have occupied half the ensuing winter in Munich.

"His Majesty requests that your Excellency may join his card party," said the Grand Mareschal, bowing before me as if I were the King of the Two Sicilies. I was therefore obliged to tear myself from the attraction of half-a-dozen duchesses and marquises and follow the dignified courtier to the end of the "Saal."

"You play whist, of course," said the King, "as I

apprehend every Englishman does? Well, then, our party is made. You shall be my partner."

Our antagonists were my first acquaintance, the Count, and a very strait-laced looking personage, who I was informed, was the Prussian Minister.

The game commenced, and I found myself *vis-à-vis* to one of the "Lord's anointed," with an ambassador at one side, and something doubtless very magnificent at the other. I began to fear either that my senses were deceiving me or that the whole affair was a *mauvaise plaisanterie* of his Bavarian Majesty, to have a hearty laugh at the end of the frolic. "Now," thought I, "is the time for Lord Callonby to see me before my greatness evaporates; for heaven knows how short-lived it is destined to be. Were he only to witness my present elevation, he would doubtless recognise the necessity of looking closely to me, otherwise who shall answer for it, that I don't march off with an archduchess, and become King of Innsprück some fine morning." Meanwhile our whist proceeded, and as his Majesty and myself held great cards, we won everything, scarcely more to the delight of the King, than the chagrin of the Prussian, whose courtier-like air was not proof against the loss of his napoleons. Just as the first game finished, and as his Majesty was complimenting me on my skill, Jack Waller passed near the table. I just caught his eye, and certainly never did a look convey astonishment like his. He stood thunderstruck; and totally forgetting everything around in his amazement. As for me I gave

him a slight smile of recognition, and proceeded with the deal.

The second game was just drawing to a close, when a group of persons assembled near the table attracted my attention by hearing for some time amongst them the phrase "My Lord." I looked steadily at them, and just as my eyes were raised, I caught those of Lord Callonby fixed upon me with a stare of surprise and wonder, to which Waller's was nothing. He came nearer, still regarding me, while I heard him mutter, "God bless me! what a resemblance."

From that moment, my eyes wandered hither and thither through the Saal in search of Lady Jane. The thought that at the very moment *she* was near, perhaps beside me, so totally overcame my reason, that I made every imaginable species of blunders, and finished by revoking and losing the game.

"*Son Excellence a apparemment perdu la téte,*" said the King, half testily, and then turning round towards the group of ladies behind, asked to whom was he indebted for losing the game, for he had it seems, observed my inattention for some time before.

By this time Lord Callonby was beside me, and after a minute's hesitation he said,—

"If I am not taking too great a liberty——"

"Why, my dear Lord, don't you know me—Lorrequer?"

"Then it is you? By Jove! man, you did puzzle me.

For the last ten minutes I have been in such a conflict of doubt and uncertainty."

"Is Lady Callonby here?" said I, interrupting him.

"No. The ladies were too fatigued; and besides, as they dine at Court to-morrow, I thought it as well they should recruit a little strength. How long have you been here?"

"Only a few hours."

"A few hours? Then you had been presented formerly, I suppose?"

"Never. Never was in Munich in my life before."

"Why, you surely can't mean that you were presented to-night, and invited to the King's table then, as I saw?"

"Exactly. The whole affair took place especially as you say."

"I confess I can't comprehend it."

"His Majesty has commanded me to invite your Excellency to dinner to-morrow," said the Grand Mareschal bowing before me.

"You see," said I, as the courtier passed on.

"I certainly do," said Lord Callonby; "but, faith, Lorrequer, you have puzzled me upon this as on many a previous occasion."

"And as I intend to do again," thought I, "if fortune be only propitious. But there's Kilkee."

"Ah, Lorrequer,—delighted to see you—only just arrived, I suppose. Promise to sup with me to-night at

the 'Baer,' for I can't stay now; I am booked for a galop and a cotillon."

Lord Callonby now took my arm, and as we sauntered through the rooms I could not help enjoying his amazement at the extent of my acquaintance, nearly every person of the Court circle recognising me by a bow.

"Are you particularly anxious about seeing the finale of these festivities?" said he.

"On the contrary," said I, with a delighted heart, "on the contrary, I feel rather fatigued, and would much rather get away."

"Well, then, my carriage is in waiting, and as I have no wish to remain, come along with me; perhaps, too, the ladies have not retired yet, and they'll be glad to see you."

"If Lady Callonby would not deem it an intrusion at this hour."

"Nothing of the kind, I'm sure; she'll be quite delighted. I hope you have abundance of Paris gossip for her."

"Unfortunately I have brought nothing from Paris save the few commissions she entrusted me with, and which are the only part of my luggage I have not lost *en route*."

"Always unlucky."

"Not always, my Lord, and I trust that Fortune intends some more civility ere she has done with me."

"Well, here we are, follow me." Upstairs we went,

down the corridor, a door opened, and in one moment more I was among the Callonbys. All the goodly resolves I had planned for many days before of testing Lady Jane's feeling towards me by the manner of her reception were gone at once. I forgot all—everything. I was conscious of the kind, the even affectionate greeting of Lady Callonby and Lady Catherine, but I had neither eyes nor ears for aught save the tall, pale, and lovely girl who, wrapped up in cashmere, was reposing upon a sofa, and who, as she extended her hand, became covered with a crimson blush, which I greatly fear was called up rather by the mode of my approach than her own secret feeling for me. Before her hand had left mine, I should not have changed my lot for that of the proudest prince in Europe. Questions now poured rapidly in about my journey; and gradually tracing back the many incidents which had prevented my joining them before, I gave a history of all my adventures since our last meeting, except such as I judged it more prudent to be silent upon. Lady Jane spoke very little, but appeared to take the liveliest interest in all that was passing, and particularly in whatever related to O'Leary, for the singularities of whose character she seemed to have a lively appreciation. On the pretence of expecting Kilkee, who promised to sup with us, we delayed the hour of separating, and though Lord Callonby was evidently impatient, Lady Callonby's interest in my scrapes and misfortunes carried the day, and it was past four when we bade good-night, I having promised to breakfast with them the following

morning, and having already pledged myself to accompany them in a tour to the Tyrol, the arrangements for which were to be commenced the very next day.

I scarcely could prevent myself giving a regular cry of joy as I reached my home, so overwhelmed was I by the absolutely affectionate reception I had met with. Lady Callonby's manner to me had never been so gracious. My Lord treated me quite on the footing of old friendship; Kilkee and Lady Catherine like a brother; and Lady Jane, albeit altered by illness, and somewhat less animated, had received me with a tone of quiet subdued regard that flattered my hopes, and set my heart wild with all its first bright anticipations. For the first time for many a month I lay down with a happy and contented spirit. One thing was certain: whatever rumours might have reached them concerning me, they had evidently heard nothing which they construed to my disadvantage, while they showed by a thousand ways that I was at least a favourite among them generally, however remote might be the prospect of any closer tie. As morning broke, and Lord Callonby's valet protruded his well-known face between my curtains and announced breakfast, I actually for a moment forgot that I was not at Callonby, and supposed that all the events of the last year had been merely the confused matter of a dream.

"Why, John, it can't be, surely. Are we in Clare?"

"No, sir, in Munich," said the poor fellow, staring at me rather suspiciously.

"Oh, I perceive; well, then, say I'll come immediately; I remember now all about it."

"Lord Kilkee, sir, desired me to give you this note." So saying, he left a small slip of paper upon the table and left the room.

It was merely an apology for not having kept his appointment on the evening before, and ran thus :—

"A thousand pardons to your Excellency for breaking tryst, but 'les beaux yeux' of a Munich damsel must plead for me; and in return I have promised to present you to her this morning. Meanwhile, if the affairs of the East and the Russian Loan are not engrossing you entirely, see the girls to the Gallery this morning, and instruct my lady in her Corregiosities, which I know you can, without my drawing upon your information. I ask this as a favour, for I have pledged myself to ride out with the belle Contesse, and can't go. Keep my secret.—

"Ever yours,

"KILKEE."

I did not puzzle myself unravelling his allusions to "the affairs of the East and the Russian Loan," but proceeded with my toilette as rapidly as possible, thanking the Bavarian beauty, with all my soul, for her forwarding my cause so ably by withdrawing the only one whose surveillance I really dreaded in my attention to Lady Jane. As I walked towards the breakfast room, the sound of loud laughter caught my ears; it increased

as I advanced; and when I opened the door, I found the Callonbys assembled round the fire absolutely convulsed with mirth. My appearance seemed rather to contribute to the subject of drollery, for as they looked at me they only laughed the louder.

"Make me one in the jest," said I, "by all means. What is it?"

"That you are already, by Jove!" said Lord Callonby —"and by far the most prominent character."

"Any news of the East?" said Lady Catherine.

"Happy to find you stand so well with the autocrat," cried Kilkee, "as I intend visiting St. Petersburg."

"Sorry to learn we are likely to lose you again so soon," said Lady Callonby; "the Duke, it seems, can't spare you."

"Lord Aberdeen will perhaps arrange it for him," said another.

"Not if the Greek affair comes on the *tapis*," said Lord Callonby gravely.

"Why, are you all mad?" said I. "What do you mean by the Emperor of Russia and Lord Aberdeen and the great Treaty?"

"Your Excellency is too deep a diplomate to discuss such matter with the profane; but still we know you."

"By Jove, Harry, it was a great *coup*. Very little more, and you might have gone the whole game."

"In twenty-four hours he'd have had the Bavarian Eagle, I'll swear," said Kilkee.

"Do, for mercy's sake, explain a little! If you are

not deranged, I must inevitably be so. What is all this about?"

"Don't pretend innocence; anything you like but that," said Lady Catherine.

"Well, I must say it's the first time I ever knew hoaxing carried to the foot of the throne," said Lady Callonby; "and how well the King takes it!"

"Lanklemann, the old *chef* of the Foreign Office, can't show his face. It was he who fell into the whole blunder; and Von Ovechausen, too, has set off for Lintz, and won't venture to come back during the season."

"You see, Harry, you have made a sensation in Munich."

"The Archduchess is outrageous," said Lady Catherine, with *méchanceté*. "Nothing will appease her indignation."

"I certainly thought you'd not have stayed your ground this morning," said Lord Callonby, taking me gravely by the arm.

"Faith, my lord, if I could only perceive what you are driving at, it would enable me to decide that matter at once."

I shall not chronicle any further the raillery I underwent, nor the mystification practised upon me by my torturing friends, but briefly state that after half-an-hour's guessing every possible solution to the difficulty but the real one, I learned to my horror that by a blunder of my friend Schnetz I had made my appearance at the ball in the uniform of the new *Chargé d'affaires;* that

my triumphant entry, my presentation to the King, my whist party, my royal partner in the quadrille, were all owing to this infernal mistake. Hence the tender inquiries of Lord Aberdeen put by the Foreign Minister, whom I mistook for Count Benningsen; from this came the favourable opinion of the Duke of Wellington, and all my influence with the Emperor of Russia; in a word, I had the mortification to learn that all the success of this very brilliant evening was more ascribable to the mistake of a tailor than the very distinguished qualities and manifold gifts of Harry Lorrequer.

CHAPTER LIV.

CONCLUSION.

For the ten days which succeeded the adventure of my last chapter I had become the lion of Munich; and while the world was divided into those who pronounced me knave or fool, his Majesty was gracious enough to take the middle course, and with a most royal condescension reiterated the invitation to Court in my own humble character of Mr. Lorrequer.

The real Simon Pure, the *Chargé d'affaires*, enjoyed the blunder prodigiously, and, except the luckless Minister for Foreign Affairs, every one laughed heartily at the affair, the Archduchess herself included.

Nothing could even have turned out more fortunately for me than did this absurd mistake; for, while all the

world were thus occupied in pronouncing upon it, I was very steadily following up my suit with Lady Jane Callonby, which, much to my surprise, the heads of the family seemed either perfectly indifferent to or well-disposed to favour. Either solution seemed so unlikely that I knew not what to think, when one morning the event came to the test in the following manner. I had been arranging about post-horses for some little excursion into the country, when I suddenly came upon Lord Callonby in the street. He took my arm, and, turning into one of the more retired alleys in the Park, said—

"Lorrequer, I have been most anxiously looking for an opportunity to have a little private conversation with you upon a matter which most nearly concerns my happiness."

These words, spoken slowly and deliberately, fell upon my heart, as the first sentences of a judge's charge may be supposed to sink into the breast of a criminal. I listened, but spoke not. His lordship went on.

"When your cousin Guy, with whose attention to my daughter you are aware, became convinced that his suit was not acceptable to her, he behaved in the most honourable and straight-forward manner. He came to me, and after deploring the decided repugnance she seemed to feel towards the match, said,—

"'As I am well aware that not only my own hopes are enlisted in the cause, but also that you and my uncle are favourably disposed towards it; it is perhaps better that I should not press Lady Jane farther at present,

but by waiting patiently and pledging her to nothing, hope that time, with better opportunities of my recommending myself to her esteem, may operate in my favour. My cousin Harry,' said he, 'seems rather the favourite at present in your house, and perhaps, as he can have no thoughts of rivalry,'—here his lordship smiled blandly, 'his influence may do something in my cause. Take then every occasion of letting him talk of me as his friend and his nearest relative; and by degrees I am certain that much of the prejudice—for I hope it is nothing more—the prejudice against me will give way. My uncle will write to Harry,' added he, 'on this head, and as Kilkee already likes him, I have little fear that he can render me the fullest service.'

"Now, Lorrequer," said Lord Callonby, drawing a full breath, "now I begin to fear that we may be pushing this experiment too far."

"I trust in God you are," I muttered between my teeth.

"I begin to fear that the continued tension of my dear girl's mind may have much to say to her present delicacy of health, and in a word, I have resolved, if you see no prospect of overcoming her prejudice against Guy, that it is better to relinquish the project at once. Answer me then frankly and fairly. Disabuse your mind of all the leaning towards your cousin's cause —that you can do, and say—shall we persist? I see your agitation, my dear, dear, friend. I feel all the difficulty of your position; you love Guy, you have his happi-

ness at heart; but think, oh! think for a moment of what a heavy responsibility you incur if the persevering in his project should end in my daughter——"

Here he became choked with emotion; while I, perfectly overwhelmed with misery at discovering *how* I was looked upon, sank upon a bench, and hid my face beneath my hands.

"Lorrequer," said he suddenly, seizing my hand, and holding it rigidly: "I cannot trust myself to say and hear more at present, but to-morrow morning come to me in my dressing-room, and tell me what you advise. Till then, adieu."

That appointment I failed in, for the next morning found me seized with a brain fever. For seven days my life was despaired of, and as the worthy Æsculapius of Munich preferred letting die to killing, my naturally strong constitution alone saved me. And the eighth day I opened my eyes, and looked about with reason once more to guide me, and saw beside the bed the figure of my good old uncle, Sir Guy. He had posted night and day from Paris, when he received the news of my illness, and had scarcely left my room since his arrival. My tale is nearly told, and I have no desire to protract it. As my convalescence advanced, Sir Guy informed me that my cousin, after every imaginable species of wildness and dissipation, had raised large sums of money by *post obit* upon the worthy old man's death, and concluded his career by marrying an actress: and there, said he, taking my hand within his own as he ended, "and there ends

one of the few dreams I have cherished of happiness, and the hope of calling my oldest friend's daughter the wife of my heir; but it is past," said the old man, wiping away the tears, "it is past, and one determination I have certainly come to. The house his mother adorned with her virtues and the halo of her angelic life, shall never be profaned by the orgies of an opera dancer. Elton is yours, Harry; yours, my dear boy, whom all my life I have hardly and unfairly treated, and whose recompense now comes ungraciously at my hands, accompanied by the punishment of another."

"But Guy, sir! what is to become of him?"

"Guy had an entail of three thousand a year. I'll pay all his debts, and have done with him."

"Has Lord Callonby heard anything of your determination in this matter?" said I, taking his hand, and looking up anxiously in his face.

"Yes, Harry; yes, he knows it all, and rejoices sincerely in your altered fortunes, although I must say he seems to feel Guy's conduct very deeply. Tell me, Harry, tell me your real opinion: Did she care for him? for within the last week, I never saw a girl suffer as she appears to have done; and how selfish a sorrow," muttered the old man unconsciously, "how thoroughly selfish; she never once enquired for that poor fellow there, lying at death's door."

"Indeed, sir," said I, starting up in bed, and taking a very different view of her indifference to my uncle.

"Eh! what have I said? no, nothing, she was

anxious, I'm sure; but the poor girl is wasted to a skeleton from fretting. A good fellow your friend Waller seems: he and Kilkee have both won my heart: egad, I didn't think that such young fellows were to be found in these degenerate days. But I'll not forget it; indeed I have not forgotten it. I wrote to old Carden. It was I got him his commission, forty-eight years ago. I have written him such a scolding about his treatment of your friend and his lovely wife. You'll see how he'll knuckle under; but here's Callonby; come now, I'll just take a stroll through the garden, and let him relieve my guard."

"Well, Lorrequer," said Lord Callonby, pressing my hand with warmth, "I'm come to wish you joy. Your worthy uncle has done exactly what he should have done, and after all, perhaps matters have taken the best turn under the circumstances. My daughter seems greatly gratified at hearing that our project is at an end, and of course now, you had better not allude to Guy in any way for the future."

"Are you permitted to read letters, Harry," said Kilkee, entering with a large packet of them, which had arrived during my illness. The first seal I broke, contained a letter from my army agent, with the *Gazette*, informing me that I was appointed to an unattached company, my regiment being ordered on foreign service. Several notes from my brother officers accompanied this, regretting that I was about to leave them; but all rejoicing at my promotion. Good for-

tune was actually raining upon me, yet I felt sad and depressed.

"You have got your company, Lorrequer, I find," said Lord Callonby, as he read a paragraph in a letter of his own. "My friend Lord Culloden has kept his promise."

"I have then to thank your lordship for so kindly thinking of me," said I.

"I owe you far more, my dear friend, than so slight a recompense can pay."

"Here, Harry! What the devil is this? Have you had a correspondence with any one's cook-maid? Never did I see such a handwriting!"

Here Kilkee handed me an epistle, which I immediately recognised as in O'Leary's writing. By this time my uncle and Waller had joined us; and as they all had heard something of my eccentric friend, it was voted that his letter should be read aloud for common benefit. Lord Callonby was appointed to the office of decyphering it; and having carefully unfolded it, he read aloud, as follows:—

"My dear Lorrequer,

"The trial is over, I am acquitted: that is, I did not murder the Minister of War, for I never saw him, and hope I never may, for, bad luck to him! he has caused much unhappiness. For the last three weeks I have been exhibited daily at two francs a head to all Paris, like a chimpanzee, and locks of my hair sold at half a napoleon a cut; so that I have left nothing but

a stripe like an Indian's scalp-lock, which would doubtless have followed the rest, if the trial was deferred any longer. My autograph brought also a very pretty revenue to the jailor, and I have written 'Arthur O'Leary,' till my fingers are cramped. However, my popularity is over at last; for they could not find me guilty of anything, except the shindy at the salon, and the good people here are to be disappointed in the spectacle of my execution—the prospect of which greatly injured the minor theatres for the last fortnight. Trevanion behaved like a trump, and got a friend to run off with Mrs. Ram, so that I am free in every respect. I hope sincerely you are the same. You had a great escape of the fair Emily. She was only quizzing you all the while, and is to be married to Tom O'Flaherty as soon as some leases fall in. He is here now, and enjoys your being taken in very much. Emily takes you off to the life, with your hand in your coat-pocket, and the other curling your whiskers" (a roar of laughter from the listeners interrupted Lord Callonby at this point; and for some moments he could not continue. At last, despite all my prayers and remonstrances, he went on): "When she throws herself on her knees, and says 'Dearest, dearest Emily,' you'd swear it was yourself. I laugh as I am writing this."

"Confound you, stupid blockhead," was my muttered imprecation.

"Oh, go on, go on," they all cried together, and his Lordship resumed—

"I hope this may cure you of love-making for some time to come, as my adventures in that way might have taught you, and that you won't make a fool of yourself, making up to that handsome Lady Jane Call——"

Here there was a regular stop, and while my Lord muttered and blundered away, the whole party were covered with confusion; all but Jack Waller, who, enjoying the *contretemps* with all his heart, actually burst into a roar of laughter, in which, after a minute's silence, he was joined by Kilkee. As for me, I knew not which way to look; while Lord Callonby, crumpling up the letter in his hand, seized my uncle's arm and led him out of the room.

"Devilish odd fellow, O'Leary," said Kilkee, trying to break the awkward silence, while he hurried to the window and attempted to hum a tune. Waller meantime approached my bed.

"I say, Hal, your friend O'Leary has floored you."

It would neither be polite, nor even friendly to chronicle my reply — which I must confess was a blessing.

"Harry, I wish one word with you alone. Come, young fellows, leave us for an instant together," said my uncle. "Harry," said he, ere the door was closed behind him, "Harry, that confounded fellow's letter has made Callonby very unhappy; you see now that as Guy's affair is at an end, how very indiscreet it is to have Lady Jane's name brought forward in this way. It will never do to have it made a subject for gossip, and so the

best thing under the circumstances is, to get away from this—so long as you are here people may talk, but once——"

At this moment Lord Callonby burst into the room, his face greatly flushed and excited, and his whole manner betraying strong agitation.

"I say, my old friend," cried he, "this affair looks more serious than I suspected!"

"Well, well, he shall start to-night, we'll lose no time about it," said Sir Guy.

"That is not what I mean——"

"Perhaps I may anticipate your Lordship?"

"Hold your tongue, sir!" cried Sir Guy, supposing that I was about to make some ill-tempered observation.

"We'll start now!"

"Hal will not!" said I, jumping out of bed, and throwing on my dressing-gown.

"He's out of his senses, again!" screamed my uncle. "Send for the doctor, and let him bleed him in both temples!"

"By Jove, you are both mad, then," said Lord Callonby.

"No! no! my Lord," said my uncle, whose temper was never proof against any crossing. "No! no! my nephew and I quit this place within an hour, however anxious I was once for an arrangement that made me—"

"Come, come, Guy," said Lord Callonby, interrupting

him, while he took his hand affectionately in his own. "You never wished it more than I did."

"Nor either of you half so much as I," I cried out, my patience at last giving way, and unwilling any longer to restrain myself.

"You, Harry!" said my uncle.

"Yes, Lorrequer," said Lord Callonby, "the last half hour has opened my eyes to what I long since should have been aware of; but, after the unhappy termination of one attempt at marrying my daughter for family motives, believe me I am quite decided about not trammelling her affection, or endangering her health, by another."

"Right, Callonby!" said my uncle with warmth, "right! just what I expected from you; the man of her choice to be a gentleman, ask for no more."

"That is my firm resolve," said Lord Callonby stoutly, "I would be nothing against him."

"I hope, my Lord, if he were even the heir to six thousand a year and the nephew of an old friend?"

"Not much, certainly," said his Lordship smiling.

By this time my toilette had been completed, and as I looked from my window I caught a glimpse of Lady Jane walking in the garden beneath. She was alone, and I fancied looked up more than once towards my room.

"But, Lorrequer," said Lord Callonby, as if recollecting himself, "remember one thing—"

I heard no more, for throwing up the sash, I leaped

down into the garden, a fall of about eighteen or twenty feet. Lady Jane just saw me drop; she gave a faint scream, and the next moment was in my arms. I am not going to confess much more.

When Lord Callonby and my uncle joined us in the garden, which they did with a *posse* of strong-bodied persons to secure the maniac, I was walking with my arm round my adored Jane's waist, her hand was in mine, and better than all, her heart was pledged to me.

"What are all these cords for?" said Jane.

Lord Callonby and my uncle looked excessively foolish, while I replied, "*To tie me*, dearest, I suspect, but I hope for a more silken bondage ere long."

"But Lorrequer, but Jane," said his Lordship, "am I to know nothing of all this?"

"Why papa, did you not give your consent? he tells me."

"Oh yes, Callonby, I can witness that."

"He has mystified us both," said my Lord.

"He at least has his own consent, papa."

"And will never withdraw it," said I, ardently.

"And you, Jane, what say you?"

"I fear, papa, I have nothing to say, for the simple reason, that it is all said."

This, then, gentle and most indulgent reader, is nearly the case with the writer, though of the occasion itself, report goes, he spoke much, and to the purpose.

With Lady Callonby some management was necessary, as it was important that she should suppose the match of

her own making. This, however, was easy, as the rest of the family entered into the plot. I consented to be voluntarily mystified, too, three days, after which, in a committee of the whole house she explained her views, and combating with a noble zeal the many objections she would herself have raised, carried the Bill bravely through.

Jane wishes me here to continue my narrative a little farther; she says that an account of the festivities at Munich are not without interest, that another chapter would be full short for even a brief *coup d'œil* at the wedding finery, and slyly hints that as His Majesty was graciously pleased to fasten on her arm a diamond bracelet as his *cadeau de noces* at the altar, that gratitude at least requires our acknowledgments; but I cannot go on thus, and would much rather erase from the mind of my reader the egotism of these Confessions by a word of the other characters of whom mention is made in them.

Jack Waller then, was, through my uncle's interference restored to favour, and the old Colonel is once more happy in the society of his beloved daughter, whose husband listens (with a patience little to be expected from him from his early promise), each after-dinner of his life to the everlasting siege of Java, and is now so thoroughly conversant with its details, that he is able to assist the narrator in disposing the figs and walnuts into the relative position of moat and ditch, and never was known to interrupt the narrative, except when the Madeira decanter represented Fort Cornelius.

Trevanion lounges about Paris as of old; dines at Véry's, drives in the Champs Elysées; and has his stall at the opera, to which latter house he has rarely gone, as O'Flaherty and he are much together.

Tom will soon furnish Bishop Luscombe an occasion for sending his surplice to the Embassy, and Emily Bingham became Madame O'Flaherty.

Lastly, O'Leary has written me a short note from Greenland, remonstrating about my mention of him in these Confessions, remarking that he could have forgiven me—but never will—the artist, who has hit his likeness exactly. One thing, however, gratifies him: the fashionable publisher has addressed a proposal to him, and induced him by very cogent arguments to gratify the world by *his* Confessions, and Arthur O'Leary will be soon in print.

Notwithstanding McGlashan's recorded preference for the chapters which miscarried, some critics, on a comparison of the first draught with the re-written matter, will possibly feel that not only is the miscarriage not to be regretted, but it may have proved a fortuitous circumstance for Lever's reputation. Portions of the chapters believed to have been lost are crude, while some petulance shewn to Lord Callonby and the hugging scenes with Lady Jane are in the reverse of good taste. The rush to tie him down as a lunatic is an improbable incident, hardly redeemed by the wit of his allusion to "Silken Bonds." Jove is invoked perhaps too frequently; and the entire MS. with its half-spelt words, and absence of punctuation and of inverted commas, reveals the haste with which it had been penned. Lever hated to re-write, and this is one of the few instances in which sheer necessity drove him to do so. But the material long simmering in his mind was now boiled down into an essence. An entire chapter dis-

appears in the recomposition; the renewed effort acquired increased strength in every line, and he seems to have avoided some errors of taste which fuller thought did not fail to detect. It was most important that this, the first book on which he designed his fame to rest, should end with point and precision. In the first draught Lorrequer is described getting a brain fever from the excitement of baulked hopes. For eight days he lies insensible, but at last recovers consciousness, and letters are brought to him which arrived during his illness. Meanwhile all the difficulties that opposed his happiness are rapidly and almost by magic removed, and Lord Callonby reads out for the invalid, who is still in bed, an absurd letter from O'Leary. The fever is omitted in the published version, and the letter is read aloud, not by pompous old Lord Callonby but by his light-hearted son, Lord Kilkee, not in the sick-chamber, as originally arranged, but for the whole family joyously assembled after dinner. The *finale*, though an improvement on the first version, seems yet too hurried, and reminds one rather of the rapid wind-up of a farce than the *dénouement* of a novel which had been for years coming out.

The chapters now printed for the first time close in Germany the career of Lorrequer, which had opened in Ireland. To the information supplied by Mr. Keane as to the sources from which the earlier material was drawn, something remains to be added.

Lever's first book, "The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer," exposed him to one breath of censure, which ever and anon has been respiring since. He was condemned for having abused the hospitality of the late Father Malachy Duggan, P.P., by describing that memorable supper which "Phiz" so ably helped to sketch.

It will be seen from the recollections of Francis A. Keane, that this rollicking scene occurred, not at the priest's house but at the wedding of Pat McGauran's blooming daughter; and the following letter, dated Moyarta Lodge, Carrigaholt, March 8th, 1879, from Father Malachy's successor, the Rev. J. Fogarty, P.P., who, for some months has been making inquiry, is still more calculated to acquit Lever of the charge of having acted an ingrate's part.

"I have been speaking to a priest who knew Father M. Duggan intimately, he was a student at the time of Lever's visit to this locality, and he assured me that Father Malachy told him that Lever

was never in Father Malachy's house ; but that he invited him and that Lever did not come. This is authentic."

Mr. Kenny, one of the mediums through which Mr. Keane's communications reached us, goes on to say—"The episode introducing Michael Sheehan the Informer in 'Lorrequer,' was founded on fact. Tomkins Brew, one of the men associated with your hero at Kilrush, was among the first resident magistrates called Stipendiaries. In 1830, and later, great social disorder and Terryaltism—a kind of communism—convulsed Clare. Men who took land were murdered. The walls of the farmers were levelled with 'crowbars,' and the cattle of the surrounding cottiers were driven on the best lands ; ancient meadows and pastures were turned up by riotous crowds in loose white shirts at mid-day fearlessly ; and so perfect was the organization that no one could be got to give evidence. Tomkins Brew, a Clare man, was then stationed in Ennis. He knew Tom Sheehan, who was suspected, asked him to call and tell him some fact merely improvised for the purpose, kept him in his study (which was open to view from the streets) for a long time, writing letters the while, and then dispatched him. This gave currency to the rumour that Sheehan had 'Sold the Pass.' The man was assailed by his companions and mobbed as a spy, and then, in mad anger, he gave full information to Brew.

"On this man's evidence over 100 persons were convicted at a Commission in Ennis. Ten or fifteen were hung. The men condemned for expatriation were sent off to the transport ship from the dock, and a blow was given to agrarianism that still keeps the country almost free from crime."

SOME PAPERS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF LEVER.

I.—RECOLLECTIONS OF CHARLES LEVER'S BOYHOOD, BY HARRY INNES, ESQ.

[Many of the following useful details—so obligingly given—have been elicited by queries.]

My knowledge of Charles Lever and his surroundings is owing to three causes: firstly, a lifelong intimacy commencing in 1817, when Lever was in his eleventh year; secondly, we were second cousins, our grandmothers (the Misses Helsham) having been sisters; and thirdly, from the fact of my sister having been the wife of Charles Lever's elder brother, the Rev. John Lever, rector of Ardnurcher. It is easy to trace the genealogy of Charles Lever's mother's mother. She was the daughter of Richard Helsham of Leggetsrath, near Kilkenny, of a family that came to Ireland in Cromwell's time, the first being Captain Arthur Helsham, of Stubber's regiment, who by the purchase of soldiers' debentures, &c., became possessed of considerable property in the neighbourhood of Kilkenny, which the family still retain.

The wife of Richard Helsham, above mentioned, was Judith, sister of Jonah Wheeler (descended from Jonah Wheeler, consecrated Bishop of Ossory in 1613), who married the heiress of Denny Cuffe of Sandhills, co. Carlow, (niece of the first Lord Desart) whose son Sir Richard took the name of Cuffe, and whose great-grandson is the present Sir Charles Wheeler Cuffe, Baronet of Lyrath, near Kilkenny. The sons of Richard Helsham were John Helsham of Hebron, and Paul Helsham, Archdeacon of Ossory, brothers therefore to Lever's grandmother. There were several sisters.

Mr. Candler who married Lever's grandmother was also a Kilkenny man, a junior branch of a family who possessed considerable property, which passed on the death of Captain Candler Brown to his niece (a

Miss Blunt), wife of John Helsham of Hebron (elder brother of Archdeacon Helsham) and from her to her third son, William, who took the name of Candler, on inheriting it, about 40 years ago. The property is still in the Helsham family, though the name of Candler has been dropped.

Mr. Candler (Lever's grandfather) left at his death two sons, and at least two daughters. The sons died without issue. Julia, the elder daughter, married James Lever; the second daughter, Ellen, married a Dublin merchant, named Craig,* by whom she had a large family, but I have lost sight of them for some years. I remember, I am afraid indistinctly, Lever's father telling me, he was married in Dublin, by a clergyman of his own name,† to whom he introduced himself as a relation.

There can be no doubt at all on the point that Lever's mother was Candler and not Blunt, as has been stated. I spent months at her house. She was niece and god-daughter to my grandmother, after whom she was named Judith, but got it changed at confirmation to Julia.

I heard my grandmother say that Paul Helsham (afterwards Archdeacon) made inquiries about James Lever, and he reported that Lever was a respectable man, and though poor likely to prosper, and would make his niece a good husband. Helsham was a proud man, but became intimate with James Lever, and often stayed at his house. One of their companions in "jocundities" was my great-uncle, Jack Long, a celebrity in Dublin eighty years ago.

The marriage with James Lever I always believed to have been a love match, and to the very last their manner was more like the

* Mr. Innes, in a subsequent communication, adds, "Ellen Craig in 1817, could not have been more than four or five years married. She was a young, good-looking woman, with three children. They lived in Tucker's Row, running from Lower Sackville Street to Marlborough Street, the firm was Livingstone and Craig, shortly afterwards it was Craig only. The business was a public crane or perhaps a bond store; I recollect it always full of sugar hogsheads. I am aware of Craig's moving out of this locality, but where he moved to, and when he moved, I cannot tell." [The move was to Abbey Street, as the Directory of the day records. Mr. Craig is described as a wine and flour merchant.]

† This must be the Rev. John Lever, described as "of Carlingford in 1777;" see vol. i. p. 4.

manner of lovers than of a humdrum couple of forty years standing. She was a little woman of coquettish manners which she retained to the last. In ordinary times she sat on James Lever's knee at dinner, helped everybody, and seldom ate anything herself. To make everybody eat to repletion, drink to repletion, and then set them on to some mode to produce fun and laughter, seemed the end and aim of her existence.

James Lever was a Manchester man, but I never heard of his cross-channel relations visiting his house in Dublin. He was a well-featured handsome man, perhaps too stoutly built for grace, but famous at all the athletic sports, particularly those requiring great strength, such as lifting or throwing weights. His height was about five feet eleven inches. His manner was very good, what is called off-hand, and socially he was an immense favourite. He told a story better than any man I ever met, his son not excepted. [Here the anecdote told by the Rev. John Lever, at p. 201, vol. i., is given.]

Mr. Lever had a contract for work at the new College of Maynooth about 1797, when he learned the anecdote, and I often heard him speak in praise of friends he had made among the professors.

Sixty years ago were the days of long sittings and good stories, they were acted as well as told, and a good social position was not seldom the result of talent displayed in this way.

Old Lever had quite a notoriety as a story-teller, and Charles' printed description of the infectious nature of the laughter which characterised one of his heroes describes the roll of fun and noise, and cheering, that I recollect so well, at the close of the old gentleman's performances.

James Lever was a man of undoubted ability. His sons believed any cleverness they had was derived from him, and I am aware of this fact, that he made himself up in the college course to enable him to help Charles through it,* for it must be confessed Charles at that time was the idlest of mortals.

* This may throw some light on the reasons which led James Lever to entertain some of the Fellows of College. *Vide* vol. i. p. 60.

[Mr. Innes here describes Charles Lever's theatrical tastes, noticed at page 11 of the first volume.]

His dislike to study was intense, anything that could be picked up by observation or imitation his quick perception mastered at once; but I have heard him say that solitary confinement was always bestowed with hesitation, even on convicted felons, and to shut a man up in a room with a lamp and a book was the same cruelty, no matter how the cell was decorated.

You ask me if he indulged in shooting and fishing.—To shooting he had a positive dislike. Fishing, when at Inistioge in 1819, 1820, and subsequent years, he practised because everybody fished, and the river Nore running through was an excellent trout and salmon stream, but he never liked it, attained no skill, and had not even bungler's luck. He was, in truth, too social an animal for any solitary amusements. Hunting excited him, and he loved it. At Inistioge he was six miles from Kilfane, then the head-quarters of the Kilkenny fox-hounds, Mr., afterwards Sir, John Power being master. The meets, when within reasonable distance, he always attended on foot, hunters forming no part of our establishment at Inistioge. He was more at home with the Thomastown Harriers, kept by the subscription of a few neighbours' families, and hunted by Hewitson Nixon, of Brownsbarn, a man stone blind from his birth, and then one of the Kilkenny wonders. It was in 1820 that he made the acquaintance of Nixon, who possessed great natural ability, and with a memory so retentive that every word spoken or read to him seemed fastened on his mind for ever. Nixon had an aptitude for horse-racing, hunting, and horse-dealing, that in a blind man seemed little short of the miraculous, with also a way of telling his adventures in these and other lines of life singularly attractive; but everything that fell from him was capped at once from Lever's fertile imagination. Many were the joint productions of these friends, some of them, no doubt, inclining to the lampoon line, but generally verses spiced, sometimes highly, with good-humoured banter. This association with Nixon helped to awaken Lever's mind to the good stuff that was in him.

Of the small pack of harriers which Thomastown fifty years ago owned, Nixon commonly acted as huntsman, and it was with these that Lever made his first appearance in the hunting field. Queer enough

were the "meets" on these occasions—men on horses or mules, some horses with halters, minus saddles, men and boys on foot, and loud was the "chorus" (as they called it) of the song that was invariably chaunted in celebration of the past exploits of the pack.

A song composed by Nixon in honour of a sporting priest of those days, acquired great popularity, and was sung at fairs and races, printed in ballad fashion, and sold for one halfpenny.

Lever's name does not occur in this production, but it was understood he was included in the "ruck" of four who are brought to grief in the last verse.

"Four horsemen bold, as I am told,
All in Mung bog lay shakin',
While Father Quin rode headlong in
Just as the hare was taken." *

In some of Lever's works, especially "The Daltons," the scenery about Inistioge is described with great exactness, though under changed names. In others he applies the names of localities thereabouts to the creations of his imagination—such as Coolnamuck, Carrick-a-neil, and Ballycocksuist; and in some of his productions bestows the names of individuals amongst his early intimates—perhaps unconsciously—on the very black or very white characters that seem indispensable in novel writing. In his last book, "Kilgobbin," the scenery of the Nore is lauded.

It was, no doubt, in the course of his frequent journeys to Inistioge at this time that Lever also made the acquaintance of a character introduced in "Jack Hinton," Tipperary Joe, who, as he tells us, "will be remembered in the old coaching days between Carlow and Kilkenny."†

* Any priest who now-a-days would venture to hunt, incurs suspension *ipso facto*. In Father Quin's time it was permitted; and he seems to have even received promotion. In reply to an inquiry, a high authority writes—

"The Rev. John Quin died P.P. of Lisdowney about 25 years ago, to which parish he had been translated from Kilmacow. He was native of parish of Johnstown, Barony of Galmoy, and brother of Tom Quin, Clerk of the Peace co. Kilkenny, father of James and John Quin, attorneys of that city. He was a very distinguished bold horseman in his day, riding with the Kilkenny foxhounds and harriers, and very popular with the club. In O'Connell's agitations he took a leading part."—W. J. F.

† See Life of Charles Lever, p. 298, vol. i.

"Tipperary Joe," writes Mr. Innes, "belonged to a rather numerous class that were a sort of institution of the old coaching times. Passengers from Kilkenny to Dublin perched on a narrow board, feet dangling in the air, exposed to all weathers for ten or twelve hours, found these runners produce quite a diversion in their misery. They raced the coach, they mounted the steps, told stories, sung songs, and chaffed the passengers; they were supposed to be witty, they were certainly impudent. Joe wore an old huntsman's coat, indicating sporting tendencies. His stories were of horses, dogs and riders, who jumped, who fell, who faltered. Another celebrity was 'cantering Jack,' his stories were of humbugging police, cheating creditors, and the escapes of prisoners. All these men got drunk, for payment was made them more in drink than in coin. Joe's maudlin songs were sentimental, Jack's patriotic. The moral tendency of either was questionable. This class was common to most of the southern coach roads, and but for Lever's genius they would be forgotten long ago."

But the pleasantest part of the material with which he stored his memory was gathered at Thomastown.

"The fun, the frolic, and the chaff at these meets," continues the very accurate and graphic recollections of Mr. Innes, "made an impression on him, observable in many of his works. The difficulty of a mount rendered his attendance less frequent than he desired, but the anticipation and the after-talk were no small pleasures.

"You ask me if Lever, during his early visits to Kilkenny, met John Banim, chief author of the O'Hara Tales. He knew John slightly in this way. He proposed for Ellen, third daughter of a John Rothe of Cappa, near Inistioge, where Lever was staying with us. The Rothes were Protestant, Banim a Catholic, and as usual in such cases, the matter was noised abroad. The girl was no doubt handsome, extremely young, and utterly illiterate. This was, it appeared, her strongest recommendation in Banim's eyes; 'she was,' he said, 'a blank sheet, on which he could write as he pleased.' Their marriage of course took place, the lady adopting the religion of her husband, and the parties departed for London. He died early, after which his widow returned to Kilkenny with a crown pension, and seemed a well-informed, accomplished woman. John Banim, when at Inistioge, was

a retiring, bashful young man, with a dislike to society; I think Lever never saw him after this, the date of which I am unable to fix." *

Further inquiries led to further interesting details.

"Lever had to my knowledge *one* attachment before his betrothal to Miss Baker. It occurred previous to his acquaintance with that family, which was not of earlier date than their residence at the Marine School. The affair I speak of resulted in an engagement which lasted certainly for a year. It fell through, I never knew exactly why—there was less intimacy between the lady's family and his, there were jealousies, and it appeared to be dropped by a sort of mutual consent. Judging from external evidence there were no hearts broken. The lady's place was soon filled up; and nearly fifty years of a peaceful and prosperous life came after the fact. The lady is alive still, in excellent health, and with over a score of grandchildren.

"There was no doubt a side to Lever's character the public never saw. His high spirits were always followed by a reaction; the more furious the fun was, and the longer it continued, the more certain and the deeper was the depression, and the more difficult it was to rouse him out of it. This you will probably say is the common lot of humanity, where good and evil contrive to balance each other.

"These reactions followed no excess in smoking or drinking, but a moderate amount of stimulant he looked upon as favourable to the development of anything good that happened to be in a man.

"I should have given you my authority for my belief that the original of Frank Webber was Ottiwell (vol. i., p. 14), and that Dr. Shewbridge Conner, afterwards of Carlow, was the prototype of Arthur O'Leary. It was simply John Lever's belief, his wife's, and so passed to me. Of his other early companions and intimates the names have escaped me, but I remember that a considerable intimacy existed between the Levers and a family named Leet."

Charles H. Leet, Esq., M.D., writes under date: "Rathmines, 7th April, 1879. I knew Charles Lever intimately as a youth from about the year 1820 to 1825. We have slept together, and when preparing for his examination, I have found him on wakening reading for it in

* Banim first met Ellen Rothe in 1821. Their marriage took place Feb. 27, 1822.

bed. We have shared many boyish trips on foot and by boat in company ; he and his brother John, a man of the noblest qualities of head and heart, were frequent visitors in my father's house in Dublin. Charles very early in life gave himself up to a wonderful inventive genius for story-telling ; he carefully studied the Percy anecdotes, and on this light frame-work he would tell stories by the hour and so identify himself with the events of the tales or histories as to impart to them all the vitality and interest of personal adventure."

Dr. Leet adds that he lost sight of Lever until after his removal to Brussels when, meeting him one day during a flying visit to Dublin, he said that he must needs return by a certain date when the queen of the Belgians expected her confinement—"unless, indeed," said he, "I write to ask her to put it off." Dr. Leet well remembers Ottiwell, and tells how, among other freaks, he blew up the college pump. Happy evenings passed round James Lever's table are recalled where with fun and frolic every guest was obliged to sing an improvised verse bringing in the name of some lady or swain present.

"I think you under-estimate the effect of Thackeray's visit to Lever at Templeogue" (vol. i., p. 337), resumes Mr. Innes. "Up to that date, Lever's works were essentially Irish ; at once they become cosmopolitan, a change so complete as to form an entirely new literary departure. It is possible a conversation I had with Lever in 1843 may throw some light upon the matter. Shortly after Thackeray's visit, Lever was in Thomastown for a short time, and he entered into a discussion of his affairs, public, private and literary, in the unreserved fashion customary with him. He told me that Thackeray arrived in Dublin under the impression that he (Lever) was under a cloud from some disagreement with London publishers, that otherwise he was unable to see a reason why he should settle in Dublin and not in London. And assuming this to be so, Thackeray offered assistance pecuniary or otherwise, to smooth matters, so as to open or re-open the way to literary head-quarters. Lever's reply was, that he was an Irishman, body, soul and spirit ; that his good name and fame, such as they were, were also Irish, and that he thought his duties lay in Ireland, and that he expected to make them both pleasant and profitable. Thackeray asked him to look around him. He was, he told him, surrounded by a lot of third-class men. Able Irish

writers, he said, were numerous, but they had gone to London, where alone their talents would be rewarded. None remained at home except a few that looked for advancement in the professions or patronage from the sham court; that in Ireland there was no public opinion; that Dublin was split up into factions, coteries, and classes, jealous of each other, and engaged in miserable squabbles. That the Magazine, if carried across the water, would be more Irish than it was; for many Irishmen of real genius could be had in London, and none could be had in Ireland. Thackeray added that, though Lever was just then popular, he would some day, perhaps, inadvertently tread on some Irishman's corns, and Irishmen's feet are all corns (he remarked), and then his worshippers would treat him, as the Chinese do their gods when they disappoint them, chop off their heads. He instanced also the case of Edinburgh after the death of Scott, when there was a stampede of literary Scots to London. Of every pound, Thackeray told him, that went into his pocket, nineteen shillings was English money, but a single shilling, Irish currency.

"Lever concluded by telling me his determination was to stick to the ship, but I thought afterwards of the fact, that he put Thackeray's arguments for the movement, in a strong and convincing way, and his own for remaining where he was, in the weakest possible manner. In this conversation Lever pronounced Thackeray to be the most good-natured man alive, but, that help from him would be worse than no help at all. 'He is like,' he said, 'a man struggling to keep his head over water, and who offers to teach his friend to swim.' Thackeray, he said, would write for anything, and about anything; and had so lost himself that his status in London was not good. I know Lever's opinion of Thackeray underwent a complete change later on, but in 1842 with 'Vanity Fair' unpublished, and 'Esmonde' unwritten, would the public verdict be very different from Lever's?"

Mr. Innes, in a final letter containing a passage, which it is hoped we may be forgiven for not mutilating, adds: "I read the proofs with intense interest, and I have no doubt the book will be most popular. The author has entered into the spirit of his work so completely, that his style becomes Lever's style, and I find it very pleasant reading. My differences with the text are so trifling in their nature, as to be scarcely worth naming, for example, 'Moatfield,'

which Charles is described as having an intention of selling, was not his, but his brother's, until the lease dropped.* Kilbride Parish and Tullamore are identical, and so on.† It was from New Ross Charles first sailed for Canada as surgeon to a passenger vessel belonging to Messrs. Pope of Waterford, a firm long extinct. I was concerned in getting him the appointment, such as it was, but I cannot recall the year, or the terms, though I recollect thinking them absurdly low, though they included the run of the captain's cabin, and a return passage. ‡

"Lever's castle-building tendencies are casually noticed in the first volume. The man really lived a great part of his life in these aërial structures, and in his youth I have listened by the hour to his thick coming fancies. He told me later on, that this practice enabled him to pass peaceable hours when surrounded by troubles and difficulties, which he was half afraid to face. There was another peculiarity in his idiosyncrasy. When he described a scene, it was mentally before his eyes. It was like a map; he saw the horses, the riders, their uniforms, heard the music, or the shouting, he saw women, and their dresses, he always saw the 'dare devils,' and above all he saw himself. In his early works he was 'Charles O'Malley,' or 'Lorrequer,' or 'Tom Burke;' towards the middle and end of his career, he gravitated into Kenny Dodd, who uttered more wit and wisdom by chalks, than King Solomon in all his glory. Lever borrowed this name from a highly respectable gentleman named Kenny, well known to Lever, and the husband of his cousin.

"I have been looking over the few letters of Lever's that have been preserved, trying for one worth the carriage. Those I have are on business, which accounts for their preservation, and I find but a single sentence characteristic of the man.

"I think his first piece appeared in Bolster's 'Cork Quarterly Magazine,' but he thought not highly of his pre-Lorrequer efforts, and did not much care to speak of them."

* This passage at p. 215, vol. i., occurs in a careful abstract of the original document in the handwriting of Charles Lever.

† If Mr. Innes will kindly refer to p. 129, vol. i., he will find that we distinctly describe them as identical.

‡ See vol. i., p. 51.

In Bolster's Magazine, but two papers are found which bear resemblance to Lever's style. In vol. i., page 169, the writer speaks of himself as a student of Trinity College "plunged in deep study when my mind will permit, or, when that is impossible, to the full as deep in the wildest extravagance of folly," the chief of a society associated for the express purpose of disturbing civic quiet and "watchmen." "When the lights were out in a row, I used to feel for their rough coats." The account which occurs is embellished, but its resemblance to the same confession in "O'Malley" will not fail to strike. It is well known to the companions of Lever's boyhood, that previous to the year 1830, if not afterwards, he indulged in the pleasures of opium eating. This paper which is headed "Recollections of Dreamland," sets out with a special reference to opium, and eight pages follow of the writer's experience in the Realms of Vision. To the last Lever felt with Byron, that our life is two-fold, and that sleep has a world of its own.

The favourable impression produced upon the writer's mind by a perusal of De Quincey's, "Confessions of an Opium Eater" is avowed—and we are informed by Dr. Leet, Lever's companion from 1820 to 1825, that the same avowal was made to him.

Further on in *Bolster*, at pp. 339—344, is "A Tale of Old Trinity," in three short chapters, of a few paragraphs each, the first opening with a sketch of the parson's cottage, and "Arthur's return to College," with a notice of the coach ready to start—"the whip thrown across the backs of the wheelers." Arthur is next discovered in Old Trinity, his attention divided between "coffee and Cicero." The examinations; the peal of the great bell at 5·45; the stroll in the park; the Lectures; are graphically mixed up with allusions to the fair girl he had left behind him.

Paul Helsham Hunt, Esq., in a letter dated Kilfera, Kilkenny, February 24, 1879, and written by direction of his mother, an octogenarian lady, Mrs. Kenny Purcell, daughter of Archdeacon Helsham, and first cousin of Charles Lever's mother, supplies some interesting genealogical information, for which however we venture to substitute the more lucid statement and pedigree of Harry Innes, Esq., but some branches of the tree, luxuriantly extending into other counties, we have taken the liberty of pruning.

LEVER'S PEDIGREE.

RICHARD HELSHAM, of Legget's Rath, Kilkenny, grandson of Arthur Helsham, a Cromwellian officer. = JUDITH WHEELER, d. of Richard Wheeler, great-grandson of Rt. Rev. Jonah Wheeler, Bishop of Ossory, died 1640, æt. 97.

- JOHN HELSHAM, of Hebron, Kilkenny. = MARY BLUNT, d. of John Blunt, and Anne, d. of Rev. William Candler, Rector of Castlecomer, a son of Thomas Candler, of Callan, son of Lt.-Col. Wm. Candler, a Cromwellian. John Helsham left four sons.
- PAUL HELSHAM, Archdeacon of Ossory; his wife was Rebecca Blunt; had issue two sons, and Frances Augusta, now Mrs. Kenny Purcell, of Kilfera, Kilkenny, *vivus* May, 1879, æt. 80.
- JUDITH HELSHAM, m. Thomas Long, of Inistioge; her d. Elizabeth m. Henry Innes, Lt. Midlothian Lt. Dragoons. His son is Harry Innes, Esq., of Thomastown, Kilkenny.
- ELIZABETH HELSHAM had, with other children, two sons, who died young. = m. MATTHEW CANDLER, of Dublin, grandson of Thomas Candler, of Callan.*

  - ELLEN CANDLER, m. Wm. Andrew Craig, and left issue.
  - JULIA CANDLER, or JUDITH. = m. JAMES LEVER, of Dublin.

    - CHARLES LEVER.
    - JOHN LEVER, Rector of Ardnurchur, died 1862. = m. ANNE INNES, d. of Lt. Henry Innes.

* The wife of Thos. Candler, of Callan, was second cousin of Queen Anne and Mary, wife of William III.; her mother was Diana Mabbot, wife of Sir H. Tuite, niece of the Earl of Clarendon.

Sophia, daughter of the late Rev. John Lever, and niece of the novelist, married Piers Edmund Butler, Esq., of Clontarf, who, from family papers now before us, seems lineal representative of the dormant Peerage of Galmoy, but the expense of prosecuting his claim in the House of Lords deters him from attempting to establish it.

II.—LEVER'S HOAX IN 1831.

The following are the documents referred to at p. 48, vol. i.

"SIR—We, the graduates and under-graduates of Trinity College, have heard, with feelings of the most profound regret, that after having resided among us for a very long period (gaining our affections by your social qualities, and eliciting our admiration by your genius and abilities), you are now about to leave us, and thus deprive our university of one who has evinced on all occasions the most uncompromising patriotism.

"On the very important question which now agitates the empire, there exists among us a diversity of opinions; but, however we may deem it our duty to differ with you in politics, we breathe but one feeling of the most intense admiration, at the noble conduct of one who, in this age of corruption, banished from his heart every selfish feeling, and cast himself and his talents into the vibrating scale, to advocate the measures of his Majesty's ministers.

"We have therefore, sir, come to the resolution of presenting you with this address, as a small testimonial of our gratitude and esteem for the many social qualities by which you were endeared to us, for the warm and zealous interest you have taken in our welfare, and of our inexpressible regret at the melancholy intelligence of your departure."

Sixty signatures are attached, including that of "Gerald Fitzgerald, A. B.," the name, it will be remembered, of one of Lever's later stories.

The victim's reply goes on to say :—

"GENTLEMEN,—I feel that I cannot command language sufficiently

strong to express to you what are my feelings on the present occasion, for the address which you have thought proper to present me with; believe me, I shall ever consider this the proudest moment of my life. . . . .

"In conclusion, I beg leave to assure you that the happiness and welfare of each of you, individually, shall be a source of the highest gratification to me; and hereafter, when I shall contemplate this enviable, gratifying, and distinguished testimony of your favour, what a proud feeling it must excite within me, that I was considered worthy of an honour never before conferred on a student of the university!

"J. D. B. [we omit the full signature.]
"Trinity College." *

Dr. Hudson remembers a paper prepared for private circulation, and written by Lever, professedly descriptive of the reception of the address. "Mr.—— received the deputation standing with his back to the fire, wore a blue frock-coat buttoned tightly, with trowsers of iron grey, his arms folded, and presenting in the *tout ensemble* a striking resemblance to the picture of Napoleon which hung over the mantelpiece."

The victim—adroitly entrapped—wrote a public letter, which we have discovered in "*Saunders*" of the day.

"Trinity College, *April 6th*, 1831.

"Sir—I have read with no little astonishment in your paper of this day, a letter bearing the signature of a graduate of college, stating as one of those that waited on me with the address, in the composition of which he assisted, that he is joined by the majority of those whose names appear, to give publicity to their absolute denial of having signed the one that appeared in your paper.

* The above appears in the local newspaper of April 5, 1831; but a paragraph headed "Communicated," may be found in "*Saunders*" of March 10, 1831, and goes on to say that "various rumours have been afloat relative to this distinguished young gentleman's sentiments on the all-engrossing question of Reform," and concludes with a statement on authority that "the measures of government have the support of Mr. B——, and his best wishes for their success."

"Now, Sir, in reply to which I beg leave most unequivocally to state, that Mr. Frank Heuson waited on me at my rooms, on Saturday last, with the address, the *exact substance* of which appeared in your columns of Monday, and I now leave the original one at your office, for the purpose of satisfying those that may appear credulous on the subject. In that address the names of Mr. Makinnon and Mr. J. Hearn appear, both certainly perfect strangers to me, and I request from you the same indulgence you showed the gentleman who voluntarily comes forward to deny what the public are aware of is perfectly correct.

"I am Sir, your obedient servant,
[Here he appended his name in full.]

"P.S.—The original address was too long for any journal; therefore several who signed it agreed with me in thinking the substance of it answered the same purpose, and are ready to come forward if necessary, to bear me out in my assertion."—J. D. B.

III.—LEVER PERSONATING CUSACK TO HIS CLASS.

R. Ridgeway, Esq., M.D., F.R.C.S.I.,—the last survivor,—as he states—of eight students who were present at Lever's personation of Mr. Cusack to his class—has been good enough to send the following for insertion in this work :—

"When I was bound to Mr. Cusack, I found, among forty other fellow-apprentices, Charles Lever, some four years my senior. I was much attracted to him, not only by his appearance and finished manner, but still more by the wit and brilliancy of his conversation.

"He was, even at that early period, engaged to his intended wife; and I generally accompanied him into town after dinner, and met him by appointment at some place on his return; and it was on these occasions that I was so entertained by his pleasant sallies, and with all those stories which afterwards appeared in his various novels, and have so delighted the world. I remember in particular, after being absent

in Wales in the year '33,* (where I went to assist Mr. Cusack in amputating a thigh, and where I remained a month to dress the stump), that on my return, Mr. Cusack, on my entering his room, threw me Lever's first book, 'Harry Lorrequer,' told me to read it, and see if I knew the author. Of course I at once was reminded of all the stories I had so often listened to fervently when a student, and the recitals of which I had so much enjoyed. But it is in 'O'Malley,' I think, that he describes so many of his old 'pals' in Stevens' Hospital, especially the ladies with whom we boarded there, and I believe I figured very well as the 'old Barrack Master.' And it is in the same story that he introduces the anecdote of the student personating the tutor in bed, but which really occurred in Stevens' Hospital, where Mr. Cusack was in the habit of examining his apprentices before rising in the morning; and where, on one occasion, during his absence, Lever so faithfully copied his manner and eccentricities, that he was only discovered through his own ignorance of the surgical point on which he was examining a senior apprentice. Whenever a wrong answer was given, Mr. C. used to express his disgust by flatulent eructations, and this Lever most happily illustrated.

"It is beyond my power to describe in writing the scene as it occurred, but it was not the less ludicrous when I state that Charles Lever was then and always a person with very polished manners, and that his fellow-student on this occasion was a very uneducated rough Co. Meath Boor, but who was a morally honest fellow, and the best surgeon in the room. Poor fellow! he is long since dead; and although there were some eight or ten present, I believe not one of them is alive except myself at this day. "R. RIDGEWAY."

"*3rd July*, 1876.†

* This must have been in the year 1839.—ED.

† Note in autograph of Dr. Ridgeway.—"Present at the personation scenes: Charley Keane, afterwards Surgeon Co. Clare Infirmary; Pat Thompson, died early; W. S. Geoghegan, Deputy Surgeon, Kildare Hospital; Thos. Wilkins; Pat. M'Gorey; George Longford, died early; John Logan, died very early in life; Gerald O'Reilly, the person alluded to above, a man of the most rough exterior in feature and figure, with a bull-neck, shock head of hair, not quite red, and of the most uncultivated mind and unpolished manners, but joined to the kindest heart and a most unselfish and generous nature, with a thorough knowledge of his profession, so far as surgery was known at that day."

IV.—REMINISCENCES OF LEVER AND THACKERAY, BY MAJOR D——.

"Lever for some time, while editing the *University*, rented a small villa at Glenageary near Kingstown, but desirous for obvious reasons of getting out of the reach of the railway, he finally occupied a very ancient house, once a priory of the Templars and known as Templeoge, lying four miles south-west of Dublin, where he remained till he left Ireland in 1845. He had been so much overrun by strange visitors, anxious to see and talk to the author of 'Lorrequer,' that not a moment had been left him for work; and, moreover, his hospitality was, I suspect, trespassed on to a great extent. All those who have enjoyed that hospitality know how spontaneous and cordial it was, but it was never so genial as when offered to his literary brethren, for whom he felt the most kindly and generous sympathy.

"In June, 1842, Thackeray went to Ireland for the purpose of collecting materials for his 'Irish Sketch-Book,' bringing with him a letter of introduction to Lever, and I was asked to meet at dinner, Thackeray, whose name was quite unknown to me and Captain Siborne, the constructor of the model of the Battle of Waterloo, now in the museum of the United Service Institution, but better known as the Historian of the Campaign of 1815. Lever had previously explained to me, that Thackeray wrote under the *nom de plume* of Michael Angelo Titmarsh, that he was what is called a humourist, had been a good deal on the continent, and meant to write about Ireland.

"This was all I knew when Thackeray entered the drawing-room at Glenageary, and after having been introduced to Mrs. Lever and her sister, was in due course made known to Captain Siborne and myself, now the only lingerer on the scene; all the rest are departed, first Siborne, then Thackeray, Mrs. Lever, her sister, and finally our kind host himself. I shall not attempt to describe Thackeray's person; it was a well-known one subsequently, and changed but little in after years. His manner was at first reserved, earnest, and quiet; rather a disappointment, perhaps, to those who may have expected some external manifestation of his supposed humouristic proclivities; what was most observable seemed to be, that he was, himself, carefully observing and desirous of not being drawn out, at least, not

prematurely.* Conversation languished, as usual, during the *mauvais quart d'heure*, but revived after the soup had been disposed of. Lever threw up some political straw to ascertain how the wind blew: Thackeray praised some *fricandeau de veau*, of which he had partaken, a thing rarely seen on Irish tables, and the *chef-d'œuvre* of Lever's German servant, who was cook and butler rolled up into one; which led to mention being made of the artistical arrangements of the kitchen at the Reform Club. This was just what was wanted: we then knew of course what Thackeray's politics were: the membership of that club was in those days considered, by many in Ireland, to be something nearly equivalent to the wearing of the Phrygian cap: things have changed since then.

"Both Thackeray and Lever were political partisans, politicians they could scarcely be considered; the former adopted the liberal ideas of that period to their fullest extent, and the immediate object of his visit to Ireland was to write up something in the interests of his party—the coming question of the day was the repeal of the Corn Laws; there was also something to be ascertained about Maynooth, and a faint shadowing forth of what has, since then, been known as 'Upas-tree felling.' Lever's politics at this time were of a very different character.

"The Magazine, of which he had just been appointed Editor, was, to a certain extent at least, an organ of the Castle, and Lever himself hoped in that way to obtain some suitable official position in Ireland. In most of this he was doomed to be disappointed: he became indeed Editor, but was always hampered and thwarted in his views of management by a species of secret and irresponsible agency that was too much for him; and was certainly injurious to the magazine and the literary fame of Lever himself. This was the real reason why Lever, after having more than once tendered his resignation, finally, in 1845, insisted on its acceptance, and his correspondence with intimate friends at that time, shows how deeply he was wounded at the treatment he had received.

* Nothing can be truer, to my apprehension, than the description given of Thackeray's face by Charlotte Brontë, in a letter to G. Smith, Esq., dated Haworth, February 29th, 1853. See his Life, by Mrs. Gaskell.—F. D.

"Thackeray was more successful as a political partisan, the line of policy he followed became every day more and more triumphant; he subsequently acquired some influence with persons of high position, including Lord Palmerston; and although he never aspired to official employment for himself, he must have been in a position to further the ambition of others in that line, for I well remember his saying to me in 1846, 'I am going to dine with Lord Palmerston to-day, shall I mention your name to him?' Thackeray was much too truthful and straightforward a man to have made an offer of the kind without knowing that he could act upon it. He abhorred boasting and exaggeration to such an extent as to be very frequently tempted to disbelieve the naked truth and to substitute for it something which, although not exactly fictitious, was but a clipped and shorn distortion of reality; this was one of his weaknesses in so far as it constantly jarred with the great kindliness of his heart; on the other hand it incontestably strengthened the poignancy of his satire, and rendered it perhaps more acceptable to the general public. This tendency to doubt, disbelieve or attenuate every positive statement of fact, was particularly conspicuous in his judgment of Irish people and Irish affairs; he distrusted everything he heard, and a great deal of what he saw in Ireland.

"It was for this reason most amusing to remark how dislike of Protestant ascendancy and Saxon supremacy in Ireland flourished in his mind, or, perhaps I should say feelings, side by side, in the same hotbed as it were, with other distrust of the Celt; vindicating too for the Roman Catholic church in Ireland, theoretically at least, a high position, whilst he was unable to conceal his contempt for the Irish themselves. There was in all this more of antagonism to one side than of sympathy with the other, and Thackeray like many others, was then unable to perceive that the liberal theory, in which he firmly believed, must in the end prove incompatible with the Neo-catholic or Ultramontane system. 'The Irish Sketch-Book' was not successful, as I have heard; I never read it myself, although, or perhaps because, I had been near the author during the period of incubation; the 'Sketch-Book' must, I fancy, have borne on its face too strong evidence of its author's scepticism, to have been a success; it could hardly have been written *con amore*. Thackeray's fame as an author

now stands much too high to be affected by the short-comings, whatever they may have been, of his earlier productions, and these things are mentioned here, only for the purpose of affording his admirers a glimpse of his state of mind and way of thinking at a certain period of his life. Of both Lever and Thackeray, it may be truly said, that they remained faithful to their political convictions to the end, and that their antagonism in this respect never for a moment lessened their mutual feelings of kindness and esteem. After all, what they differed most about was rather a social than a purely political matter. Lever really liked, if not the aristocracy, at least a great many men of high birth; he had had the good fortune to have been kindly and delicately treated by more than one Peer, his taste for the society of men of intellect and culture, did not prevent his seeking for these gifts and acknowledging their presence in the upper classes of society as well as elsewhere, but there was no flunkeyism or servility in his nature; with him the question was not, Who is who? but, What is who? Whether Thackeray's earlier experiences had been of a different character I know not, but at the period in question, there seemed to be a tinge of resentment, indicating something of the sort in his expressed estimate of the aristocracies of his own and other countries; the impression thus conveyed was an unpleasant one, being out of harmony with his real nature, perhaps it was merely a reflexion of the anti-aristocratic spirit of the moment specially evoked by the struggle for the repeal of the Corn Laws, although something of the same feeling is apparent in all his later works.*

"I have endeavoured to give a sketch of the two principal figures who sat at Lever's dinner-table as they then were; of Captain Siborne it will suffice to say that he was a perfect gentleman, and a most accomplished officer, thoroughly scientific, a man of fine intellect and judgment, most unpretending in his manner, and very well informed. Pity that the British Army was then so constituted as to condemn a man like Siborne to an utterly subordinate and inadequate sphere of duty.

* Mr. Trollope has pronounced the character of Colonel Newcome to have, as an English gentleman, no equal in British fiction. Want of sympathy for titled nobility is a matter *sui generis*.

"As dinner proceeded, and after the ladies had retired, the two protagonists began to skirmish, endeavouring to draw each other out. Neither knew much of the other, beyond what could be gleaned from their published works. Thackeray had as yet written only under an assumed name or anonymously; it was not so easy to get at him through his writings: Lever on the contrary had put his name to one or two works of so marked a character, that it seemed quite natural to connect his own individuality with that of some of his earlier heroes, who were, as we know, somewhat flighty and eccentric. The conversation had been led by Lever to the subject of the battle of Waterloo; he wished to afford Captain Siborne an opportunity of saying a word, perhaps too, he wanted to show that he himself knew something of the matter; he had in fact picked up during his *séjour* at Brussels a certain amount of anecdote and detail that did very well for after-dinner conversation. Thackeray soon joined in; he did not pretend to know anything about the great battle, but he evidently wished to spur on Lever to identify himself with Charles O'Malley, just as George IV. used to do of himself, with regard to some real or imaginary general of the German Legion. I have already alluded to Thackeray's ideas, imputing want of truthfulness to the Irish; he seemed always to wish to betray every Irishman he met into boasting in some shape or on some subject; he often reminded me of the agent's provocations of the continental police in this respect. It is not an uncommon thing with Englishmen to talk as if they fancied that they had a positive right to exact from every Irishman they meet with, a certain amount of extravagance, exaggeration and buffoonery as his proper tribute to their own amusement, and they seem to resent as a kind of wrong, any reticence that may be exhibited. Irishmen are perhaps too frequently prone to undergo, with some self-complacency, this trotting-out process, and have therefore only themselves to blame for the results. With Lever this was not the case, on that occasion at least, and, quickly perceiving his antagonist's game, he met his feints with very quiet, but perfectly efficacious parries. It was highly interesting, and not a little amusing to observe how these two men played each a part, seemingly belonging to the other; Thackeray assuming what he judged to be a style of conversation suitable for Lever, whilst the

latter responded in the same sarcastic and sceptical tone, proper to an English tourist in Ireland.

"French and German literature next came on the *tapis*. Thackeray seemed to value the last named more highly than the other. I fancy he understood it better than did Lever, whose favourite German author was Jean Paul. Siborne bore testimony to the greater reliability of German authors, but his remark had reference to historical works, whereas both Lever and Thackeray were evidently thinking of belletristic literature. The latter paid Lever the very handsome compliment of saying, that he would rather have written Lorrequer's English version of the Student song, 'The Pope he leads a happy life,' &c., than anything he had himself hitherto done in literature. Lever could scarcely give credence to this strong piece of flattery from the mouth of the future author of *Vanity Fair*: he had made the translation for the especial benefit of the Barschen club of which he had been founder and president in early days, and never thought very much of this piece; now it was quite evident, however, that he was very much pleased, and also finally convinced that Thackeray really meant what he said. I suspect that the first stone of the foundation of their future friendship was thus laid, certainly from that moment they became much more cordial to each other, and the conversation ran smoother and with less restraint than it had previously done. Passing on to French authors, full justice was done to the celebrities of the day: Dumas, Alphonse Karr, Balzac, George Sand, &c. Thackeray criticised the French theatre very sharply, and came out with a strong bit of humorous representation, which convulsed us with laughter. It had reference to some drama or opera, I forget what, in which the principal male character comes on the stage with a pirouette, and waving his hand in a majestic manner to a chorus, representing Jews in exile at Babylon, says, 'Chantez nous une chanson de Jérusalem.' Thackeray rose from his seat and did the thing, pirouette and all, most inimitably: by the way, he was fond of exhibiting his French pronunciation, also of caricaturing very cleverly that of his own countrymen, the English. Siborne and I willingly accepted the part of *temoins* to the brilliant conversational encounter that ensued, in which the two principals exerted themselves to their utmost to please each other. How much both delighted and

excelled in conversation must be known to many of their friends, but perhaps neither ever showed to greater advantage than when contrasted with the other, when so many differences of nationality, early association and habit of thought were brought into vivid relief. Thackeray's conversation flowed more evenly on the whole, like the deeper current of a river meandering through a cultivated country, and only occasionally quickening its pace and gathering force to dash over some well-selected point; Lever's, on the contrary, resembled a mountain torrent leaping over rocks and precipices, from pool to pool, in clouds of sparkling spray.

"Amongst his own countrymen Lever had, for this very reason, many admirers, and also some few who felt jealous of him. Amongst these was Mr. Remy Sheehan, who, together with his brother William, were at that time joint proprietors and editors of the *Mail*, well-known in those days as the organ of the Protestant ascendancy party and of the clergy of the Establishment. The Sheehans were Roman Catholics; one of their sisters was, I have heard, a nun, who was much scandalised and greatly grieved at her brothers being the champions of the Orange party, even in the way of business, especially as Mr. Remy Sheehan's strong zeal had on one occasion led him into an encounter in the streets with no less a personage than the great Liberator himself. Some one said that Remy Sheehan had *horse-whipped* O'Connell with an umbrella. I have already mentioned that an attack had been made on Lord Eliot in the columns of the *Mail;* also that Lever had replied to it in the 'University Magazine,' which led to his becoming editor. Under these circumstances it may be easily imagined that a sort of antagonism existed between these two men, Lever and Remy Sheehan. This, of course, did not prevent an interchange of hospitality between the two editors; and on one occasion, when Lever dined at Sheehan's house, some lady whom he 'took down' to dinner asked him, in a languishing tone, if he knew who certain wooden figures, clad in armour and posted conspicuously in Sheehan's hall, were intended to represent. The immediate reply was, 'Those are the compositors of the *Evening Mail*.' This reply was overheard and very much resented, the more so because in the course of the evening Lever got hold of and nearly kept to himself the whole of the conversation, to the great discomfiture and annoy-

ance of Remy Sheehan, who piqued himself not a little on his own powers. Nothing was, however, said at the time, but Sheehan determined to have his revenge; not, indeed, after the fashion of French editors, with pistol or rapier, although the two men would, if necessary, no doubt have consented to go through the process of what some Dublin duellist once happily characterised as 'shivering on a daisy in the Fifteen acres.' Sheehan adopted a different plan: he asked the late Sir Philip Crampton, who was also a most agreeable conversationalist, to meet Lever at dinner, and the two planned together a course of action which should enable them to talk down Lever; for, although unable to cope with him single-handed, their united efforts were more than sufficient for the purpose. A select number of so-called 'mutual friends' were invited to assist at Lever's discomfiture, which was complete; for whenever Sir Philip was about to cease talking, he gave the preconcerted signal to Sheehan, who was thus enabled to 'take up the thread of the discourse' before Lever had a chance, or *vice versâ* Sir Philip when Sheehan had spun out his yarn.

"To return to Thackeray and Lever's first meeting. Plans were discussed about what was worth seeing, and as to the how and the when. As there had been a good deal of military talk, Siborne suggested that Thackeray should go and see a grand review about to be held in the Park the next day, and at which some Brazilian officers were expected to appear. Lever asked me to accompany his guest, to which, of course, I readily assented. We drove out to the Chief Secretary's lodge, and then, dismissing our car, walked on to the ground. The movements of the troops had already commenced, and as we walked over the heath a brigade of heavy cavalry came out from the right of the line, and began to charge right up towards the place where we were. Wishing to call his attention to the charge, which was well executed—the late lamented Sir J. Yorke Scarlett led one regiment—I begged Thackeray to move forward as quickly as possible, which he seemed nervous about doing, being under the impression that we should be ridden down. I assured him that there was not the slightest danger, and tried to get him on; but, what between his short-sightedness and his nervousness, we scarcely got near enough to see the finale well, which he then regretted very much, and ques-

tioned me very closely as to how I knew that the line of cavalry would not advance farther than it did. Whilst we were discussing this matter, an officer of heavy dragoons rode out towards us, and my companion was once more in a fuss, fancying that we had got to some place where we should not have been, and that the 'heavy' had been sent to turn us off the ground ignominiously. This, of course, amused me very much, and I said that probably the officer had deranged some of his straps or girths, and was anxious to obtain our assistance, which turned out to be the case. Whatever was wrong was put right in a few minutes, when the officer rode after his regiment at full gallop, leaving us to trudge on towards the point where the general and his staff were posted. Thinking that my office of cicerone, which Lever imposed on me, entailed the duty of pointing out the general object and nature of the movements that were being carried out, I endeavoured to do so in few words; but Thackeray, after listening attentively for a time, begged of me not to take any more trouble on the subject, as he felt convinced that he should never understand the least about these matters; so we went instead to review the ladies, who then, as now, were very frequent spectators of the military operations of the Dublin garrison. Whilst we sauntered along, I could perceive many a head turned to follow the stalwart figure of my companion. No one who saw him on that day, nor he himself dreamed, that he was the one man of the thousands then present whose name would become most widely known, and whose fame would survive for generations to come, even after Sir James Scarlett's splendid feat of hunting up a whole division of Russian cavalry at Balaclava with a mere handful of British heavies has been forgotten, or known only to some military student. As for myself, I must confess that I was thinking how strange it was that such a great powerful man should be so nervous about a cavalry evolution.

"After the review or field-day was over, and, happily for us, without the usual finale of a torrent of rain brought down by the artillery, we strolled homewards along the heights which overlook the city on the northern bank of the Liffey. Thackeray was much pleased with the views, and remarked that, although he had been incredulous on the subject, he must admit that Irish scenery presented a delicacy of tint and a mellow harmony of aërial perspective that he had never seen

elsewhere. We both agreed that having regard to outline and general form of its natural features, coupled with the deficiency of masses of woodland, Ireland cannot compete with other countries, but that the colouring is, in certain states of the atmosphere, exquisitely tender and surpassingly lovely. Some months later, on his return to Dublin from the North of Ireland, I found him one morning in his room at the Shelburn Hotel in Stephen's Green, employed in trying to colour a very pretty sketch he had taken somewhere. All of a sudden he threw away his pencil, saying he could not catch the Irish tones to his own satisfaction, asking me at the same time to try my hand. I simply laid on a flat tone of indigo on a rebellious piece of water in the foreground, the effect of which pleased him very much, and saying that he could now finish the drawing himself, he proposed that we should start on our excursion for that day. A few days afterwards, catching a glimpse of a water-coloured drawing of mine in my room, he exclaimed, 'Ah! it was only imitation after all. I thought the other day that you were an artist, and here I find the selfsame flat tone of indigo on the water in the foreground.' I was much amused of course, and not a little interested, as this incident afforded me a clearer insight into the man's character than I had hitherto obtained. It was very evident that he smelt imposture in everything that came under his notice, in Ireland at least, and perhaps elsewhere too.

"To return to our conversation, whilst walking into Dublin after the review,—Thackeray remarked that a great amount of interest still attached to everything connected with Waterloo, the British public seeming never to tire of it; he had been thinking since we met at dinner of writing something on the subject himself, but he did not see his way clearly. Lever's treatment of it in 'O'Malley' seemed to him much too imaginative and high-flown, in fact audacious and regardless of all probability. This I could scarcely deny, but said that Lever thought only of his hero, and used the battle itself just as the manager of a theatre does the scenes which he gets painted to suit the dialogue. Thackeray thought that the amount of interest shown was a proof of the existence of a very deep-seated national feeling, and having survived so long, 'how intense,' said he, 'must it have been at the time, and how widely spread amongst all classes of society.' From what Captain Siborne had mentioned at Lever's

house, added to what he had himself seen on that day at the review, he seemed to have arrived at the conclusion that it would be useless for him to attempt anything in the way of military scene-painting that could lay the slightest claim to correctness, and he scarcely disguised his ridicule of Lever's method of treating such matters, which by the way, he caricatured so drolly in his imitations of 'Our Novelists,' shortly afterwards. On the whole, too, he seemed much inclined to 'laugh at martial might,' although he still held to the idea that 'something might be made of Waterloo,' even without the smoke and din of the action being introduced. I have an indistinct recollection, too, of his having said as much subsequently at Lever's house. Years afterwards, on reading 'Vanity Fair,' the whole conversation and the circumstances under which it took place, came back to me, and I became aware of the great thoughtfulness and foresight with which Thackeray planned out his work, and how careful he was to attempt nothing doubtful or beyond his power.

"When Thackeray, in 1842, visited Ulster, he became a great favourite with the officers of a regiment, then stationed at Newry, and was a frequent and welcome guest at their mess. Here, too, he got useful materials, and found 'sitters' for some of the events and characters introduced in the Brussels scenes of 'Vanity Fair,' and on his return to Dublin from the North, I found that he had got up a considerable stock of military characteristic and anecdote. I fancy, that he was struck with the great success of Lever's military stories, and may have possibly contemplated doing something in that way; for at the time he had not struck out 'a line' for himself, and was writing desultory articles on a variety of subjects. It must be remembered, too, that Dickens was then highly popular with English readers especially, whilst Lever was equally so in Ireland and with the military. But Thackeray had, I think, already come to the conclusion, that Dickens' field did not suit him, and it may be that he wanted to see what could be made of Ireland and warfare as subjects for his pen. That he soon afterwards selected a style and field of operation perfectly original and admirably suited to his own powers is now matter of history, but in 1842 he was, although evidently capable of great things, as yet undeveloped as an author and undecided what course to take.

"Some evenings later at Lever's, Thackeray said, 'Can you go with me to Maynooth one of these days? I have seen Trinity College, and now wish to have a look at the Roman Catholic establishment.' On the day appointed we started from the Broadstone, by canal passenger-boat, for our destination. It was one of those 'chill summer days' peculiar to Ireland; the country through which we journeyed presented no feature of interest; the sky was dull with leaden-coloured clouds, and as we sat cooped up in the long narrow boat the outlook was dull enough. What the French call 'un morne silence' was spread around us, as we glided noiselessly along the surface of the canal, and we were only too happy when the steward informed us that we had reached our point of debarkation. I had never before seen the village of Maynooth: it appeared to both of us to be dirty and dismal, the colour all grey in grey, the houses half-ruinous, whilst the surrounding country seemed quite in harmony, being flat, dreary, and bleak. On asking our way to the College, a woman pointed to a mass of grey buildings, that looked very like a sadly neglected military barrack. This was previous to the erection of the new College. Thackeray was, as I saw, busily engaged in noting down all the 'features' of the place, a sardonic smile of utter derision and contempt overspreading his own. I confess to have felt dismayed at the withering expression, part of which was very like satisfaction at having found out something very positive to fasten on. 'What a shameful mistake,' he said, 'to plant down an educational establishment of so much importance in such a miserable locality, where there is absolutely nothing to enliven existence.' One of the professors soon appeared, and very courteously offered to conduct us over the establishment. Thackeray said in a few words that he was a literary man, and asked what was to be seen? The professor replied with some hesitation, 'Perhaps the library and (as well as I can remember) a small collection of mathematical instruments,' adding that not very much could be expected as the funds at their disposal were very limited. I think we did go into the library, but Thackeray, after asking a few questions as to the number of students and professors, looked at his watch, and said, that, as we were to return to Lever's to dinner by the next boat, we must away.

"Thackeray expressed great disgust at the filth and discomfort he

had seen. I could not help saying that Maynooth certainly was most desolate-looking ; but Thackeray shut me up, by replying that Trinity College was not a whit better in respect of cleanliness ; he was evidently in a censorious and perhaps combative humour ; I felt pained and disappointed ; he had shown himself in a new, and, to me, unexpected light : he had hitherto seemed so genial and amicable that I began to doubt his identity ; but I saw more of the same kind of thing subsequently, and can now, on looking back, estimate, at its real value, Charlotte Brontë's notice of 'Esmond,' 'No second-rate imitator can write in that way ; no coarse scene-painter can charm us with an illusion so delicate and perfect. But what bitter satire, what relentless dissection of diseased subjects ! Well, and this, too, is right, or would be right if the savage surgeon did not seem so fiercely pleased with his work—Thackeray would not like all the world to be good ; no great satirist would like all the world to be perfect—as usual he is to women quite unjust.' If Thackeray did not wish all the world to be good, he certainly was only too happy, when he did meet what he thought good, to recognise and admire it. His affection for Lever to the last was in itself a proof of it. His wonderful power of reading character and estimating motives it was that made him a satirist ; he came into contact with more evil than good, and acquired, as Charlotte Brontë says, a taste 'for dissecting an ulcer or an aneurism, and feeling pleasure in putting his cruel knife or probe into quivering living flesh.' But he was not willingly blind to whatever good came in his way. Perhaps there was more plausibility in Miss Brontë's charge as regards his attitude towards women. I can well remember his asking a person, who was supposed to know something of Hungary,—in fact myself,—to join him in writing a severe criticism on Miss Pardoe's 'City of the Magyar,' for the *Foreign Quarterly*. Whether he carried out his threat I know not : it was one of his weaknesses to play the part of an *enfant terrible*. Miss Brontë may not have been disinterested, for she refers to a criticism of 'Jane Eyre' which appeared in the *Times*, and was attributed to Thackeray. My own experience of him leads me to believe that he only understood one side of female character and nature, and was unable to do justice to the whole.

"To return to Thackeray's canal-boat voyage from Maynooth.

"There was a friend of his, a Captain S——, employed on the staff in Dublin, who lived in a pretty villa on the canal banks. We got the boatmen to put us ashore near this place, and went to make a call. The Captain 'chaffed' Thackeray about a sort of light summer coat he wore, called a 'Zephyr,' which was pronounced to be 'snobbish.' The Captain's manner seemed to annoy the future author of the 'Book of Snobs,' who after a spicy replication, got up, and took his leave. This Captain was, as Thackeray informed me, the son of a literary man in London, who had been, as he said, 'the Jupiter Tonans of the *Times*.' We walked through the Park into Dublin, and on parting at the Shelburne he gave me Dumas' 'Le Rhin,' of which he had just completed a very sharp critique for the *Foreign Quarterly*. Poor Dumas lived to see all his Rhine dreams vanish into smoke in 1870. Thackeray's ridicule of them is long since buried and forgotten in the pages of the defunct Review.

"James had been living at Brussels previously, and an intimacy had sprung up between Lever and him. Thackeray's star was then barely peeping over the eastern horizon; Lever's had attained an altitude that rendered it clearly visible to the uncharmed eye, whilst James's had already passed its point of culmination, and was in its descending node.

"I do not think that Thackeray and James met at Lever's house; the former had left Dublin for a tour to Killarney, Kenmare, Glengariff, the Giant's Causeway, etc. Captain Siborne and myself with Mortimer O'Sullivan were once more invited to meet James at Lever's table. Dr. O'Sullivan was an eloquent preacher, also a very decided political partisan, then looked upon as an embryo bishop. I have never forgotten a very severe chastisement I had the honour to receive from him, at Lever's table, for venturing to express a very mild doubt as to whether Orangeism had really been the salvation of Ireland, and ought fairly to be considered the perfection of political wisdom; this rebuke shut me up on the subject of Irish politics most completely, and finally; but Mortimer was, nevertheless, a man of great talent and a most agreeable conversationalist.

"Dr. Anster, another cherished guest of Lever's, was a charming companion, very quiet in his manner, almost too reserved and timid, often singularly absent, but occasionally bringing out the drollest and

most original *morceaux* of intense quaintness, the effect of which was heightened by his peculiar nervous way of speaking, reminding one strongly of a German professor, whose outward man and, often, peculiar manners so seldom indicate the fund of learning and fine feeling that usually comes to light later. And so it was too with Anster, whose entire worth was perhaps never sufficiently acknowleged.*

"In the after-dinner conversation on this occasion James took a very decided lead, especially on matters that I should never have expected him to discuss authoritatively, horsemanship and military tactics. James was not horsey looking; one would at first sight be inclined to set him down as an exception to the general rule, that 'all Britons are born riders,' he looked more like a seaman than a soldier. Why he should have selected two such topics puzzled both Siborne and myself, but I subsequently found that James liked to seize upon and talk categorically about things which other individuals of the company present might be suspected of considering their own peculiar hobbies. However that may be, he entangled Lever in a great equestrian controversy, which proved not a little amusing, for Lever, if not a very correct or elegant, was at least a very bold rider, and could knock as much out of the veriest screw as any man I have ever known.

"Lever's practical knowledge made him more than a match for James's theory, even although set forth in the most flowery language, and therefore the other subject, military tactics, was started, Siborne being this time singled out as an antagonist. The Captain, however, not caring to discuss professional matters with a civilian, effected a skilful retreat under cover of such vague generalities as occurred to him at the moment, so James was left to develop his ideas of warfare from his own internal consciousness, and I remember recognising them subsequently in one of his later novels, 'Arrah Neil,' I think, where a highly scientific imaginary battle is fought in a corner of a field leading to a ford. James, so fond of horseflesh, finished his career as Consul-General at Venice, where the sight of a horse was never seen. How strange that Lever and he should have ended as

* *Vide* Lever's anecdote of Anster, p. 298, *ante*.

commercial representatives of England at the two rival Queens of the Adriatic, but no doubt they were quite as efficient as any other men would have been in the same positions.

"I know that Lever sincerely rejoiced at Thackeray's great success, and was a warm admirer of his writings, and perhaps no man was ever so much improved by success as Thackeray, as was perhaps most apparent to those who came in contact with him only at intervals. I remember dining at his house near Kensington in 1846, and being much struck with the great change that had taken place in him since I had seen him in Ireland in 1842. Amongst his guests on that day were two Irishmen whose names are well known, or at least were so at that time, namely, Morgan John O'Connell, M.P., and Father Prout. On my chaffing about finding him in contact with Irishmen, knowing, as I did, the estimate he had frequently expressed to me of their character, he said laughingly, 'one must have sitters.' It was from the conversation at that dinner-table that I first came to know precisely what was then brewing in Italy, and to form some estimate of the attitude likely to be assumed by Lord Palmerston in the event of revolutionary movements ensuing. In less than two years his lordship was, as Foreign minister, advocating the cession by Austria, to the King of Sardinia, of the whole country west of the Mincio line, an event which it took another decade to accomplish.

"Another friend of Lever's was J. Sheridan Lefanu, the novelist, from whom I received the following letter in 1872, soon after the death of Lever, and when I had been encouraged to become his biographer:—'I have too long postponed answering your letter; and have been hoping for a quiet day, to make search for any letters I may have among my papers from our brilliant and lamented friend Lever. I have been so hurried and harassed by work, which I have not the power of deferring, and the pressure and distraction seemed so likely to continue for some time longer, that I have not yet done what I am most anxious to do, and must not longer postpone writing to explain the cause of my delaying to supply any materials that may be in my possession. They are, I grieve to say, very much scantier than under less unfavourable circumstances, they would have been. During the years, the last ten or twelve, of his life, when accident drew us from an early, but comparatively slight acquaintance, into

intimacy and correspondence, I was so miserably overworked, and in consequence, so often knocked up by illness, that I had little spirits and almost no time for a correspondence which would have been, under happier circumstances, a most delightful indulgence for me. With our late admirable friend Dr. Thomas Beatty the case was very different. He corresponded, I have reason to think, for many years, if not during the entire of his continental life, with Lever. They were intimate, I fancy, from the time at which Lever was pursuing his professional studies. I have therefore a very strong impression that there exists among the papers of the late Doctor Beatty, a treasure of such letters.'"

The fertility of imagination specially peculiar to novelists, is shown in this letter of Mr. Lefanu. A search having been made among the papers of the late Dr. Beatty—only a few letters from Lever could be found, written with a view to consult that eminent obstetrician regarding the disease which soon after proved fatal to Mrs. Lever.

Mention has been made, in these jottings, of Anster at Templeogue. There it was that Lever's intimacy with him began, and to those days he would feelingly allude in after years. On completing "O'Dowd," he wrote shortly before the death of Anster :—"My dear Anster. If you knew how often I thought of you as I was writing this book —if you knew how there rose before my mind memories of long ago —of those glorious evenings with all those fine spirits to think of whom is a triumph even with all its sadness—and if you knew how I long to meet once more the few soldiers who survive of that old guard, you would see how naturally I dedicate my volume to him who was the best of us."

Anster, about this time, told Lever, with many compliments from himself, that a literary friend, whom he did not name, had warmly praised "O'Dowd." "Did you think I could spare him, or not want to quote him ?" was the reply. "Alas ! it is a bill on which I need every endorsement."

On a later occasion Lever privately renewed the aspiration expressed above, adding, "Let me hope that we have each of us so much of our lease to run that we may meet, even though it be to talk over the past and of those who adorned it."

V.—LEVER'S DECLARATION THAT "DEUVILLE" MUST HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY HIM.

(See p. 158, vol. ii.)

The piece alluded to, and which helps to throw light on the influences that led him to change his style so completely (see Mr. Trollope's letter, p. 270, *ante*), was one of Bret Harte's condensed novels, "Terence Deuville." "Chapter I., My Home," describes the little village of Pilwiddle, on the western coast of Ireland. "On a lofty crag overlooking the hoarse Atlantic, stands Deuville's Shot-Tower—a corruption of D'Euville's Chateau, so-called from my great grandfather, Phelim St. Remy D'Euville, who assumed the title of a French heiress, with whom he ran away." He describes himself as, when only eight, winning the St. Remy Cup—riding his blood-mare, Hellfire. There was a great stir among the swell spectators who surrounded the lord-lieutenant on the course; and his daughter, the Hon. Blanche Sackville, quite fell in love with the boy rider. An A.D.C. tries to disenchant her by sneering at him as "a ragged scion," Deuville deliberately insults him, and the lordling A.D.C. retorts livid with rage—a duel is the result. Nineteen shots are exchanged in the glen, and at each fire Deuville shoots away a button from his uniform. "As my last bullet shot off the last button from his sleeve, I remarked, 'You seem now, my lord, to be almost as ragged as the gentry you sneered at,' and rode haughtily away." The Chateau is sold and a commission bought. Deuville is next found in the army, and with the allies preparing to resist Napoleon. On the battlefield he is handed a dispatch in mistake for a general officer, with directions to communicate the order to Picton, whose division, however, being two miles away, he is obliged to ride through a heavy cross-fire of artillery and musketry. He cuts his way through an entire squadron of cavalry who try to surround him, advances boldly on a battery and sabres the gunners ere they can bring their pieces to bear. By this time Terence Deuville has penetrated the French centre. A sharp voice in French, from a little man in a cocked hat, asks whether he is a prisoner? "'No, sire,' I replied proudly. 'A spy, then?' I placed my hand upon my sword, but a gesture from the

Emperor made me forbear." Later on, when presenting his snuff-box with a bow, Napoleon's quick eye catching the cypher on the lid, asks if he were any relative of Roderick D'Euville. This man turns out to have been his father and the schoolfellow of Napoleon at the *École Polytechnique*. An embrace takes place in presence of the entire staff; and hanging upon his breast the cross of the Legion of Honour which he removes from his own, he bids one of his marshals conduct Deuville back to his regiment. He is so intoxicated with the honour that on reaching the English lines he utters a shout of joy and puts spurs to his horse. Then it was that the adventure with the Duke noticed in Miss Boyle's letter (p. 158, *ante*) occurs. "Seize him!" roars the entire army. Deuville faints, and for six months lies in brain fever. During his illness the grape-shot which he received are extracted. When he opens his eyes, he meets the sweet glance of a Sister of Mercy—the quondam Lady Blanche; and "I am now, dear reader, Sir Terence Sackville, K.C.B., and Lady Blanche is Lady Sackville."

VI.—SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF LEVER BY HIS NEPHEW, DR. JOHN LEVER, A.B.

(See p. 197, Vol. II.)

[Dr. John Lever in some answers to queries gives a glimpse of his uncle which ought not to be lost. By way of preface to his account of Lever's wonderfully high spirits in Dublin, it may be observed, as not unfrequently happened in his case, that reaction is traceable in it. From Casa Capponi, Florence, the novelist wrote to McGlashan, just before starting for Ireland in 1854, that a residence for seven years in the relaxing clime of Italy was a sad damper to all energy, and that he feared there would be no use winding up the clock again when the spring had relaxed for ever! He hoped, however, that he might see much of his old friend when he should go over in August. It would not be McGlashan's busy season, and no doubt they would have abundance of time together. Softening of the brain, however, had already begun its work on McGlashan, and instead of the Scot

cheering Lever as he was wont to do, Lever found himself obliged to rally the sinking Scot.]

"I first met him at Sallynoggin, near Kingstown, in 1842, where he rented a house for the season; but I was then too young to retain any marked impressions of him. In 1854 he visited my father at Ardnurcher (I was then going through college), and I dined with him at the Imperial Hotel in Dublin, to meet young Baker, now in orders, and James McGlashan. The dinner was a roar of fun from beginning to end. I never heard anything like his stories, the usually impassive waiters rushing from the room with napkins stuffing their mouths, &c. He was very fond of recounting his amusements: boating, riding, driving, fencing, use of the gloves; whist-playing and gambling on the Continent: how a foreigner would sit an hour staring steadfastly at you, to find out if you held such and such a card before he would play his own. I heard him say of an F.T.C.D., who once played all night with him, when desiring a student next morning in the Examination Hall to translate, that he called on him to 'play' instead. On one occasion he wanted the late eminent Sir William Wilde, M.D., to come and meet at dinner some friends he had assembled; and calling at his house was told that the Doctor could not possibly appear. Being denied several times, my uncle at last put his handkerchief in bandage form over one of his merry twinkling eyes. This expedient brought the oculist to the door in a moment; the *rencontre* ending in a hearty laugh at the success of the trick, which continued that evening to afford much amusement at Templeogue.

"Next day, when with my uncle at his hotel, while dressing to dine with some Trinity fellows, an invitation came from Sir Philip Crampton for the following day. I asked if he would go. He said, 'No; he knew all Sir Philip's stories, and, what is better, could tell them a great deal better himself.'* My uncle's extreme friendship and love for the Rev. Mortimer O'Sullivan brought him down to Tanderagee within that week. He mentioned that the latter, standing at his own hall door, when lecturing a labourer in his employment on the follies of intemperance, said, 'Just look at that poor cow there at the

* This when read by the light of page 412, *ante*, is amusing enough.

stream ; she won't drink too much.' 'Who'd thank her, when it's only water !' was the reply. He would sometimes regret having left the medical profession, but dispensary doctoring he regarded as wretched work. His ruling passion all through life was love of horses ; he drew Kenny J. Dodd in a great measure for himself, and frightened my father by saying that he intended bringing out K. J.'s brother, the country parson, in his next. His letters home were generally pictures of great banquets with great people, their witty *mots*, &c., and descriptions of Italian life, given with more elaboration in his books. You see I know more of his early doings than later on. He was staying with Lord Spencer in the Phœnix Park in 1870, and had no time to visit us in the King's County, though wishing he could find himself sufficiently disengaged from the importunities of friends to do so.

"Of course you know Frank Webber's original was my father's college chum, John Ottiwell, who did many of, if not all, the wonderful things ascribed to the former. The student's pranks were most amusing. On one occasion Ottiwell assisted to put the late Dr. Montgomery into the box of a Foundling Hospital, and rang the bell, when he was immediately turned in for a deserted infant."

The college chum of Charles Lever seems to have been Robert Boyle (p. 41, vol. i.). Ottiwell, we now learn, was the college chum of his brother John—the senior by ten years of Charles.

As regards Lever's trip to Tanderagee it was followed, in 1857, by a more extended stay on the part of his son. Dr. O'Sullivan's family describe the latter as possessing many fine qualities—especially love for his mother, whose latest letter he always carried about his person, and constantly kissed. He mentioned how his father had early taught him a passion for horseflesh by carrying upstairs to him, while yet a child, a tiny pony, which was lifted by the ears, and made to give the paw like a dog.

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